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ABSTRACT

A critical and comparative study of recent changes in the New Zealand educational system is provided in this book. These changes have been largely inspired by the New Right, yet they have been introduced by a Labor government with an apparent commitment to equality of opportunity. For Western societies impacted by New Right policies the New Zealand situation indicates ways in which educational decentralization policies may facilitate the development of egalitarian and democratic educational policies. The aim of the book is to demonstrate how recent education reforms in New Zealand can be developed in a democratic way. The 14 chapters examine the context in which these reforms have occurred, yet show how the experiences are relevant to other countries concerned with the development of democratic education. Chapters include the following case studies: "Citizens or Consumers? The Politics of Educational Reform: An Introduction," by Hugh Lauder, Cathy Wylie, and Rose Parker-Taunoa; "Education and the Role of the State: Devolution and Control Post-Picot," by John Codd, Liz Gordon, and Richard Harker; "Education, Democracy, and the Crisis of the Welfare State," by Hugh Lauder; "Power to the People? The Great Educational Reform Act and Tomorrow's Schools: A Critical and Comparative Perspective," by John Evans and Brian Davies; "The Politics of Reforming Maori Education: The Transforming Potential of Kura Kaupapa Maori," by Graham Hingangaroa Smith; "'I Just Want a Decent Job,' Working Class Girls' Education: Perspectives and Policy Issues," by Alison Jones; "Notes on the Schooling of the English Working Class: What Lessons for New Zealand? A Comparative Briefing Paper," by Gerald Grace; "The Politics of Curriculum Innovation," by G. I. A. R. Khan; "Towards Pluralism and Democracy: The Administration of an Inner City School," by Ros Heinz; "Public Examinations and the Structuring of Inequality: A Case Study," by David Hughes and Hugh Lauder; "Illiteracy, Improper Literacy and the Development of an Underclass," by Colin Lankshear; "Towards an Alternative Transition Education Policy," by Wanda Korndorffer; "Trade Union Education and Democracy," by Linda Sissons; and "Work and Education," by Alan Scott and John Freeman-Moir.
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Towards Successful Schooling

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Edited by

Hugh Lauder and Cathy Wylie



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Contents

<i>Foreword</i>		<i>vii</i>
<i>Glossary</i>		<i>ix</i>
<i>Chapter 1</i>	Citizens or Consumers? The Politics of Educational Reform: An Introduction <i>Hugh Lauder, Cathy Wylie and Rose Parker-Taunoa</i>	1
<i>Chapter 2</i>	Education and the Role of the State: Devolution and Control Post-Picot <i>John Codd, Liz Gordon and Richard Harker</i>	15
<i>Chapter 3</i>	Education, Democracy and the Crisis of the Welfare State <i>Hugh Lauder</i>	33
<i>Chapter 4</i>	Power to the People? The Great Education Reform Act and Tomorrow's Schools: A Critical and Comparative Perspective <i>John Evans and Brian Davies</i>	53
<i>Chapter 5</i>	The Politics of Reforming Maori Education: The Transforming Potential of Kura Kaupapa Maori <i>Graham Hingangaroa Smith</i>	73
<i>Chapter 6</i>	'I Just Wanna Decent Job', Working Class Girls' Education: Perspectives and Policy Issues <i>Alison Jones</i>	89
<i>Chapter 7</i>	Notes on the Schooling of the English Working Class: What Lessons for New Zealand? A Comparative Briefing Paper <i>Gerald Grace</i>	105
<i>Chapter 8</i>	The Politics of Curriculum Innovation <i>G.I.A.R. Khan</i>	121

Contents

<i>Chapter 9</i>	<i>Towards Pluralism and Democracy: The Administration of an Inner City School Ros Heinz</i>	139
<i>Chapter 10</i>	<i>Public Examinations and the Structuring of Inequality: A Case Study David Hughes and Hugh Lauder</i>	151
<i>Chapter 11</i>	<i>Illiteracy, Improper Literacy and the Development of an Underclass Colin Lankshear</i>	175
<i>Chapter 12</i>	<i>Towards an Alternative Transition Education Policy Wanda Korndörffer</i>	197
<i>Chapter 13</i>	<i>Trade Union Education and Democracy Linda Sissons</i>	209
<i>Chapter 14</i>	<i>Work and Education Alan Scott and John Freeman-Moir</i>	219
	<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	231
	<i>Index</i>	235

Foreword

In recent years there have been major changes to educational systems in the Western world. Often these changes have been justified by reference to successful educational practices in other countries. However, there are good reasons for treating such justifications with scepticism. It is not always possible simply to abstract educational practices from one context and apply them in another successfully. Moreover, claims that policies in one country are more successful than those in another have to be treated cautiously; there are always problems in making valid comparisons between the educational performances of different countries. It is important, therefore, that critical and comparative studies are made of educational systems which take full account of the contexts in which they are embedded.

To this end Falmer Press has recently published an in-depth study of Sweden, *The Struggle for Democratic Participation: Equality and Participation in Sweden*, edited by Ball and Larsson. In this volume a critical and comparative study is made of recent changes to the New Zealand educational system. The changes in New Zealand have been largely inspired by the New Right, yet they have been introduced by a Labour government with an apparent commitment to equality of opportunity. For those in other Western societies who have felt the impact of New Right policies the New Zealand case is interesting because it provides some indication of how policies of decentralization in education might be used to develop egalitarian and democratic educational policies. The aim of this book is to show how recent educational reforms in New Zealand can be developed in a democratic way. The chapters in the book are sensitive to the context in which these reforms have taken place; nevertheless, there are lessons to be learned from the New Zealand experience for those concerned with the development of democratic education.

Glossary

To make it easier for the reader, the editors have decided to provide a glossary for those terms and concepts most frequently used in the book which are specific to the New Zealand context.

The Education System

New Zealand pupils attend primary school until the age of 10 or 11 when they go to intermediate school for two years before transferring to secondary school at the age of 13. There are some full primary schools which cater for students up to the age of 13. There is a small private sector and some elite single sex state schools, but the majority of students go to comprehensive schools. There is, in principle, open entry to university but only a small percentage of students in any year go directly from school to university (approximately 13 per cent). There is an increasing number of mature students returning to tertiary education but numbers at university are dominated by those from professional and managerial backgrounds.

The Examination System

- (a) School Certificate (SC): is a qualification normally attempted in Form 5 (the third year of secondary schooling) by pupils typically aged between 15 and 16 years. Students attempt from one to six subjects from a list of just over forty options. While there are exceptions, most subjects involve a three hour, normative external examination, the results of which are subject to hierarchical subject scaling in an attempt to ensure that 'bright' pupils are not penalized by their choice of subject. The exceptions include, for example, three pilot schemes in which mathematics is 'internally' assessed with grades being determined by reference tests sat early in the SC year. This generates a set of grades for students which can then be distributed by the school as it wishes (see Sixth Form Certificate below).

- (b) Sixth Form Certificate (SFC): is a qualification attained the year after SC. The award is said to be internally assessed. In fact, the New Zealand Department of Education uses pupils' SC marks from the year before to assign each school a set of grades which the schools award to students at the end of the year. While the set of grades for each school is fixed by their students' performance at SC the previous year, the school is free to decide which students will receive which grades out of the set awarded to the school. Since 1986 SFC has been the sole award in Form 6.
- (c) University Entrance (UE): abandoned in 1986, was the Form 6 qualification giving entry to university. The award was internally assessed by larger schools and there was a back-up examination for students not awarded the qualification by their schools or for small schools not able to assess internally.
- (d) Higher School Certificate (HSC): University Bursary and University Scholarships are Form 7 awards attained by the minority of the age cohort who reach the final year of secondary schooling to take this exam. HSC is awarded on the satisfactory completion of the Form 7 year, while B Bursary, A Bursary and Scholarships are awards made on the basis of competitive external exams.

Hui

A meeting or gathering.

Kura Kaupapa Maori

Autonomous Maori schools teaching a Maori designed curriculum in the Maori language.

Marae

Maori tribal meeting place.

New Zealand Educational Institute

The union representing all primary school teachers.

Pakeha

Maori term for New Zealanders of European descent, also commonly used by many Pakeha in self-reference.

Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA)

The union representing secondary school teachers, including principals.

Rogernomics

Thatcherite economic policies developed in New Zealand by the former Labour Minister of Finance, Roger Douglas.

Te Kohanga Reo

Maori initiated and developed language nests for children under 5 (the school starting age). Begun in 1984, there are now 520 catering for 9600 children (9 per cent of all those attending early childhood institutions).

Treaty of Waitangi

Treaty between Maori chiefs and the British government signed in 1840, which sets out the terms of a partnership between Maori and the Crown in which Maori acknowledged the sovereignty of the British Crown in return for its protection in 'unqualified exercise of their chieftainship over their lands, villages and all their treasures' (Maori version). Treasures (taonga) are now recognized to include culture and language. Maori attempts to invoke the Treaty in the face of the rapid appropriation of Maori land and culture were largely unsuccessful until the formation of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975. This Tribunal can make recommendations on claims relating to the practical application of the principles of the Treaty. By 1986 there was some Pakeha acceptance that the Treaty had established a partnership whose terms had been broken by Pakeha. The issues relating to the Treaty are still contentious but the Labour government had accepted that 'all future legislation referred to cabinet at the policy approval stage should drawn attention to the practical applications of the Treaty of Waitangi.'

Citizens or Consumers? The Politics of Educational Reform: An Introduction

Hugh Lauder, Cathy Wylie and Rose Parker-Taunoa

In recent years many Western societies have felt the impact of New Right policies, particularly in education. The chapters in this book critically discuss the nature of New Right inspired educational reforms in New Zealand and begin to develop alternative policies to them. While New Right policies, everywhere, have followed a similar theoretical trajectory, they have been subject to local variations and are therefore likely to differ markedly in their consequences. The interest in the reforms now underway in New Zealand lies in the fact that they have been introduced by a Labour government. This has meant that, in theory at least, the inegalitarian edge to some of these reforms has been blunted. From a comparative perspective, this policy-hybrid provides some pointers as to how New Right policies can be turned to good account by those interested in a democratic and egalitarian education.

Most of the chapters in this book were first presented at a seminar in March 1988 in Wellington, New Zealand under the auspices of the Royal Commission on Social Policy. Analysis of existing research and policy already done for the Commission showed that the education system was inegalitarian as regards the life chances of working class people, Maori, and women.¹ Hence the focus of this seminar was on working class education in New Zealand at a time when youth unemployment was increasing rapidly and the New Right was in the ascendancy. Indeed the economic policies introduced by the Labour government since its election in 1984 have, appropriately, been described as those of a 'speeded up Thatcherism'.

In education, as in other spheres of policy-making, the major New Right intellectual impetus for change was coming from the Treasury which published a blueprint for the future of New Zealand education at the end of 1987.² It embraced all the shibboleths of the New Right: a reduction in state expenditure on education, increased privatization of education and increased competition between educational institutions. The subtlety of the Treasury's argument lay in its use of radical research in the sociology of

education to demonstrate the inequities in education and to claim that increased competition would promote equality of opportunity. Given the highly influential position of Treasury in relation to the Labour government, this New Right treatise posed a major threat to standards, equality and democracy in education. However, while the New Right was in the ascendancy the same Labour government appointed a Royal Commission on Social Policy with terms of reference which put great weight on the 'extent to which New Zealand meets the standard of a fair society and the main reasons why New Zealand falls short of these standards'. The standards specified included genuine opportunity for all people, of whatever race, gender, social and economic position and a fair distribution of the wealth and resources of New Zealand,³ and specified these aims within the context of the Treaty of Waitangi: a clear signal to Maori that their unequal position in New Zealand society would be addressed. These terms of reference clearly ran counter to the New Right thrust.

For some time now sociologists of education, both in New Zealand and elsewhere, have had a marginal role in policy-making so the seminar offered a rare opportunity to speak before and with policy-makers, lobbyists, administrators and the press. Moreover because of the political context of the conference it appeared that what was said would feed directly into the struggle between right and left.⁴ As a result, many of the chapters in this book bear the marks of that political struggle and they range in style from those reporting on painstaking research and reflection through to those polemical in intent which clearly convey the anger many felt — and feel — both at the rising levels of unemployment and what was perceived to be the betrayal of working class students and their futures by a Labour government.

Few would now disagree that this fourth Labour government has attempted a largely New Right inspired revolution designed to produce an 'enterprise culture' in New Zealand. Consequently things have changed rapidly in education as in other aspects of social and economic life since the conference. So much so, that the untimely and unceremonious end to the Royal Commission on Social Policy and the subsequent changes in education which are now being implemented themselves constitute an important area of study in the development of educational policy. Indeed, this collection would appear already dated if contributors had not revised them in the light of subsequent events.

In order to provide a background to these chapters for readers in New Zealand and overseas we shall discuss, briefly, the political position of the Royal Commission on Social Policy, the reasons for its demise and recent policy-making in education. Such a discussion cannot avoid making critical judgments about the nature and possible outcomes of the major educational reforms now in place. As such, this introduction can also be viewed as a first sketch for an analysis of the way educational policy has been made during a period of social upheaval.

The major players in this drama have been a series of commissions and committees of which the Royal Commission on Social Policy was the first. This was followed by the Picot Report (1988) on the administration of primary and secondary education, the government's response to it, *Tomorrow's Schools* (1988); the Hawke Report (1988) on post-compulsory education and training, the government's response to it, *Learning for Life* (1989); and the Meade Report (1988) on early childhood care and education and the government's response to it, *Before Five* (1989). It is expected that the major policy changes signalled by these three government responses will be implemented by early 1990. Clearly the size and speed of the changes now being implemented pose major problems for would be critics because so little time has been given to reflection or debate on these policies.⁵ For the purposes of this book we have chosen mainly to concentrate on the reform of the secondary school system because it is at this level, especially at the point of transition between school and work (or unemployment), that the cutting edge of inequality lies. Our account, therefore, begins with the Royal Commission on Social Policy and extends through to the policy recommendations in *Tomorrow's Schools*.

The Royal Commission on Social Policy

Much was expected in the area of social policy from the Labour Party, and much was promised in its election campaign before it won the 1984 snap election. One of the promises was a major review of social policy.⁶ By the time the Royal Commission emerged,⁷ in 1986, the social effects of the new government's economic policies were being felt acutely, particularly the impact of rising unemployment. The government's economic policy was determined by the Finance Minister, Roger Douglas, supported by a New Right dominated Treasury who argued for a deregulated economy and a major reduction in state expenditure coupled with a concerted attack on inflation. Consequently, the government withdrew subsidies to the private sector, particularly farmers, started the process of dismantling import barriers, began selling off state assets and used monetary policy as the single instrument for reducing inflation.

This form of 'speeded up Thatcherism', known locally as 'Rogernomics', after its author Roger Douglas, rapidly came to dominate the Labour government's agenda. However, in its initial period in power this government sent out conflicting signals as to its intentions. During the 1984 election the Labour Party had emphasized the need for policy-making by consultation and it held a major economic summit shortly after winning the election; prominent businessmen were seen on national television news applauding the speech of a young spokeswoman for the unemployed. But while the business sector's links with the government flourished, the links with working people became increasingly token as the New Right economic policies began

to bite. The government's stated agenda was first to establish economic policy, in order to deal with what was perceived to be a major crisis caused by overseas debt and high inflation, and then to address social policy. While that held hope for some, for others it clearly meant that the guidelines for a revamped social policy had already been determined by the harsh demands of a deregulated market economy.

The decision to proceed with the Royal Commission on Social Policy therefore had a mixed reception. Was it a move within the government, by those troubled by the right-wing direction of economic policy, to counter the Finance Minister, the Treasury and big business? Or was it just another public relations exercise, a call for consultation and public debate which would be ignored by the government?

The Royal Commission was to report in October 1988 and it began an innovative and thorough, if gruelling, process of consultation and information gathering in early 1987. It actively sought submissions from people who traditionally did not make them by taking itself to Maori marae (meeting places) and Pakeha (European) community centres to hear oral as well as written submissions. A freephone was used to allow women at home the opportunity to discuss issues that concerned them. Submissions and presentations were well covered by the media, and by the end of 1987 it was clear that the Commission's thinking was running counter to that of the Treasury ministers and their officials.

Although the government was supposed to hold off major policy decisions until the Commission had completed its report, it went ahead with a package of policy initiatives, at the prompting of Roger Douglas, on 12 December 1987. These included fundamental changes with adverse consequences for social equality, such as a flat rate tax for all wage earners, and the announcement of seventeen 'task forces' on various aspects of social policy. The Commission made its feelings clear about being so blatantly usurped by the New Right in cabinet. There was discussion amongst the Commissioners as to whether or not they should resign. The weight of the submissions entrusted to them — the hopes that had been placed in them by ordinary people, despite the growing fears that the Commission's proposals would be ignored — led them to carry on. But while the flat rate tax package was subsequently amended it was clear that the government would continue to undermine the Commission's work and the decision was taken to report five months earlier than expected.

The cost of making this decision was that the Royal Commission had no time to arrive at a comprehensive set of recommendations, although in certain areas it set out a clear direction for policy, notably with a strong emphasis on the state funding of social provisions, including education, and on the changes which should properly stem from the Treaty of Waitangi as a contractual partnership between two peoples, Maori and Pakeha. Its five volume report provides a rich source of data and insights regarding New Zealand society, its aspirations and values. It is best seen, therefore, as a useful

starting point for social policy-making rather than a prescription for change.

Predictably, the report has had little impact on government policy largely because it went against the grain of its own New Right policy directions. Some of these directions were already being crystallized by the various task forces on social and educational policy set up by the government while the Royal Commission was still at work. The most significant of these, for education, was that of the task force reviewing education administration, headed by an Auckland businessman Brian Picot, which was established in July 1987.

The Picot Report

The terms of reference for the Picot task force had a mild flavour of devolution and mentioned the need for 'systems and structures . . . flexible and responsive to changes in the educational needs of the community and the objectives of the Government' and for 'recommendations which will ensure the efficiency of any new system of administration that might be proposed'. There was no reference to the quality of education, social equity or democracy.

The task force's report was still in the drafting stages when the *Towards Successful Schooling* seminar was held. At that time the Treasury's blueprint for education still posed the major threat to the possibility of developing a genuinely democratic and egalitarian education system. The focus for left-wing concern changed rapidly with the publication of the Picot task force's report, *Administering for Excellence*, in May 1988.

It then became clear that the New Right, in the form of the Treasury influence, had played a major role in the recommendations made by the task force as John Codd, Liz Gordon and Richard Harker show in their chapter. Schools were to be modelled on the structure of private enterprises. Fundamental decision-making on school policy was to be devolved to individual schools, especially as regards finance. In particular principals, seen as chief executives, would enjoy increased power which, in theory, would be shared by an elected board of five trustees drawn from parents of students at the school, one elected teacher and one elected student. They would also control appointments to the staff, including that of the principal. The board would be held accountable to the Minister of Education by means of a charter or contract which would specify the aims of the school and the methods by which it would achieve these aims. Central control would, however, retain a strong influence through the charter since certain aims laid down by the state would be non-negotiable. Having ratified the charter, the Minister would ensure that its terms were being carried out effectively by a review and audit inspection of each school every two years. Every student had the right to attend their local school but could opt to go to another. Where demand for a particular school exceeded the number of places, a ballot would

take place to determine the lucky applicants.

In addition to this core structure further elements of 'choice' and 'community partnership' were tacked on. For example, where twenty-one or more parents are dissatisfied with a particular school or want their children to have a special kind of education, they can, in theory, withdraw from the school and set up their own school with government support. The Picot task force also envisaged the setting up of community forums where the views of the whole community can be made known to schools and to coordinate local institutions and services.

Tomorrow's Schools

The major thrust of *Administering for Excellence* was accepted in the government's response to it, *Tomorrow's Schools*. However, the government's official groups and the subsequent implementation working groups which produced, respectively, *Tomorrow's Schools* and the working out of its policies in detail, placed a substantially stronger emphasis on equity than appeared in the original report of the Picot task force. For example, the principle of deficit funding was extended beyond the original criteria to include schools in 'lower socioeconomic areas'. Similarly the zoning criteria were made more rigorous by specifying that schools could not expand to accommodate any potential increase in 'demand'. In a similar vein, the more authoritarian aspects of the administration of schools have been replaced, in documents on training for the newly elected boards, by an emphasis on partnership between school staffs and parents.⁸

What is significant about these subsequent modifications is that the teacher unions, which had been shut out of participation in policy formulation hitherto, battled and won the right to be represented on the implementation working groups. In a sense this was a retreat, by the government, from New Right dogma which asserts that teachers are part of the middle class capture of the state which excludes working class participation in education (Lauder, 1987).

A range of issues emerged from the *Tomorrow's Schools* policy. The first three chapters look at the nature of the state in relation to educational policy. Codd, Gordon and Harker consider the fundamental changes in education to be a product of economic crisis in which the state has to restructure the way demands are made upon it as regards education. The aim is to reduce state expenditure while providing legitimate reasons for the restructuring of education. In his chapter Hugh Lauder argues that in terms of schooling the notions of equity and democracy cannot be divorced, yet according to *Tomorrow's Schools* whether schools develop as democratic institutions will be left up to the personal 'style' of the principal. He further argues that equity cannot be developed without a strong welfare state to support educational initiatives but this government is actually reducing state expenditure on

welfare services. The question then that he seeks to answer is why a Labour government, with an initial commitment to the welfare state, has been allowed to attack the welfare state so vigorously. He concludes by suggesting that an alternative political response to the New Right can be found in the recent Swedish debate on economic and industrial democracy. John Evans and Brian Davies also pursue the themes of democracy and control by asking whether or not the so-called popular crisis in education, both in Britain and New Zealand, has been manufactured by the New Right in order to exert greater control over state education. Certainly in New Zealand there is good evidence to suggest that while not all was well with the education system, a majority of people feel it is performing well enough.⁹ Underlying the New Right claim that education is not performing well is the notion of consumer sovereignty, but Evans and Davies make the point that the Reform Act in England and *Tomorrow's Schools* badly confuse the 'choice' of consumers with the proper entitlement of citizenry. In effect these reforms embody New Right attempts to reduce democracy to consumer choice. This chapter is significant because it raises the issue of policy importation. Increasingly policies are being imported from other societies and their implementation justified on dubious grounds,¹⁰ and therefore the kind of critical comparative analysis that Evans and Davies provide is essential.

There are some common themes which emerge throughout this book; the emphasis on the democratic rights of citizens, rather than simply as consumers, is one. Closely related to it is the view that society does not comprise atomized individuals as the New Right would suggest but social classes, racial and gender groupings which have specific political/cultural interests. In the next three chapters the relationship between *Tomorrow's Schools*, Maori, working class women and the working class as a whole is explored.

Within the New Zealand context the group who have suffered most the intended and unintended consequences of Pakeha capitalism and the culture it has created are Maori. For Graham Hingangaroa Smith *Tomorrow's Schools* represents yet another attempt by Pakeha New Zealanders to impose their view of education on Maori. The fact is that Maori have been badly served by a Pakeha education system as the following tables demonstrate. Table 1.1 shows the percentage distribution of School Certificate grades awarded to Maori and non-Maori in 1986. A similar story emerges when all forms of public examination results are taken into account (see Table 1.2).

These statistics represent symptoms of a long history of Pakeha dominance and oppression in New Zealand and many Maori have decided that the only course remaining to them is to opt out of the Pakeha education system. There is already a successful precedent for doing so: early childhood Kohanga Reo (Maori language nests) represent a grass roots initiative by Maori in order to teach children from the perspective of Maori culture and language. Graham Smith argues that this important initiative should be extended. Of course, many socialists brought up on the ideal of the

Table 1.1 Percentage distribution of School Certificate grades awarded in 1986: attainments of all pupils leaving secondary schools during 1986

Grade	Non-Maori	Maori
A1	5.4	1.2
A2	14.0	4.4
B1	24.8	13.5
B2	25.4	23.4
C1	20.0	31.5
C2	8.6	22.4
D	0.9	3.7

(Source: Educational Statistics of New Zealand, 1987)

Table 1.2 Attainments of non-Maori and Maori school leavers in 1986

	Total school leavers	Percentage of all school leavers	Maori school leavers	Percentage of Maori school leavers
Attainment				
University scholarship	186	0.3	2	0.02
University bursary	6110	10.5	133	1.5
High school certificate	4904	8.4	351	4.0
Sixth form certificate	16039	27.5	1401	15.9
School certificate	15796	27.1	2207	25.1
No formal qualification	15348	26.3	4693	53.4

(Source: Educational statistics of New Zealand, 1987)

comprehensive school where students from various backgrounds could be taught together may have reservations concerning Smith's argument. But such a view presupposes that Maori and Pakeha schools would have common aims and a common curriculum and this is clearly not the case. In the end, Smith's view is compelling. The comprehensive ideal could only exist so long as this society was viewed as relatively homogeneous. But we live in a bicultural society in which history and research suggest that equality cannot be created through education alone, that it has to be complemented through equality of power and resources in society as a whole.

In her chapter Alison Jones asks whether New Right forms of devolution will improve the life chances of a group of Pacific Island working class girls she has studied and argues strongly that it will not. Changes in educational administration, she argues, will leave the aspirations and educational biographies of these girls untouched. Gerald Grace discusses the historical relationship between teachers and the working class in Britain, noting that a similar relationship may well hold here. Grace charts the appropriation of working class forms of popular education by the middle class, then asks how the barriers which have been erected between essentially middle class

forms of education, taught by middle class teachers, and the working class can be broken down.

Some answers are provided in the following three chapters. In his chapter Khan puts both the former bureaucratic system and the new decentralized system of educational administration under the microscope by looking at one attempt to develop a grass roots curriculum for working class students. His evidence shows that the old bureaucratic system was not responsive to grass roots initiatives, giving some credence to the view that bureaucratic forms of administration do not meet the aspirations of teachers and students. Yet he also has strong reservations about the ability of the present so-called decentralized system to promote local initiatives. This is because the new forms of administration have been developed within a New Right policy context. As such, he argues that if schools are de-zoned and narrow forms of assessment, of the kind being implemented in England, are introduced here, grass roots initiatives will be stultified. As a result a curriculum of the kind he outlines which attempts to serve the interests of working class students will never be allowed to develop.

Ros Heinz discusses an example of the development of a pluralist and democratic school of the kind that could be considered a model for reschooling in a democratic and egalitarian society. In the present context, however, she also shows how such a school is caught in a series of tensions that have to be negotiated. For example, a democratic school ought to be able to decide how both power and remuneration are shared, yet both *Tomorrow's Schools* and the teacher unions assume that a hierarchy of positions in terms of status and remuneration is desirable. *Tomorrow's Schools* invests legal responsibility for the running of the school in a board of trustees and, given the way power is usually deployed,¹¹ in the principal. For the teacher unions a nationally determined set of work conditions is necessary to ensure solidarity among teachers, which is essential if teachers are to act both to protect their work conditions and to lobby for school improvements.¹² There are, then, powerful constraints on those who desire to develop genuinely democratic forms of schooling.

Hughes and Lauder raise the question of whether the marked variations in examination results achieved by different social groups reflect different preferences and orientations to education or whether they form part of an institutionalized system of dominance that creates inequality. By examining the data on inequality in School Certificate, the mechanisms by which students pass and fail School Certificate and the logic of educational decision-making for different classes, they argue that the examination represents a form of systematic discrimination. They believe it should be abolished and replaced with teacher-based forms of assessment.

In the final group of chapters relationships between working class education and the labour market are explored. Colin Lankshear argues that there is an intimate connection between the rise of mass unemployment and marginal part-time employment and an increase in illiteracy. Drawing on

both New Zealand and overseas literature and data, he concludes that illiteracy is not a primary cause of unemployment and that illiteracy cannot be seen in terms of the characteristics of individuals. Rather it is a social phenomenon generated by unequal power relations and resources in society. As such illiteracy will only be eradicated in New Zealand when there are fundamental changes to the social structure.

Wanda Korndörffer examines the government's policy on transition education and finds it inadequate in what it can deliver and less than honest in what it promises, and on this basis argues for a reappraisal of policies in this area. Linda Sissons argues strongly for the need for trade union education and links such education to the extension of democratic rights in society. In doing so she discusses recent initiatives which have been prompted by government legislation setting up a Trade Union Education Authority. In the final chapter Alan Scott and John Freeman-Moir suggest that participatory democracy and full employment are the means by which the current crisis in working class schooling can be resolved. Ultimately, if successful schooling is to be more than a vacuous slogan, society must be democratized so that people can have a say in the running of all facets of their lives, the very opposite to the New Right notion of consumer sovereignty, which masks an increasing authoritarianism.

Overall, then, how does the balance sheet on *Tomorrow's Schools* add up? While the move to greater community participation is to be applauded, it is the nature of that participation that is crucial. In the New Right view this means that there should be competition between schools and parents should thereby have increased choice as to where they send their children. This government has, however, rejected dezoning for a formula which provides for a fairly stringent system of zoning. Zoning is a crucial issue because it is the only, if limited, means of ensuring schools get a reasonable social class mix. Which is necessary if all students are to have relatively equal opportunities (Lauder and Hughes, 1989). It remains essential to any policy promoting equality of opportunity. Again, on the positive side, the non-negotiable goals in the school charters place a heavy stress on equity with respect to: recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi as a basis for bicultural policies within the school;¹³ student performance and staff appointments and promotions. Underwriting such a policy will be a policy of differential funding for working class schools and schools with special needs.

If we compare these initiatives with the Education Reform Act in England, *Tomorrow's Schools* is clearly far more radical than its English counterpart, which emphasizes competition between schools through dezoning and does not appear to make any concession on differential funding. Moreover, these class biases are exacerbated by the different privileges extended to the various sectors in English education. Private schools, for example, will not be subject to the National Curriculum, while certain schools, typically middle class single sex schools, will be able to opt out of local authority control, thereby preserving their more elite status in comparison

to state comprehensives. But the comprehensive system will be further undermined by city technical colleges which will cream off the most able students from grammar schools. In essence the English reforms openly embrace the aim of producing a three-tiered education system for the ruling, middle and working classes.

In *Tomorrow's Schools*, the only measure analogous to the opting out clause in England is that whereby twenty-one parents can demand to set up a different school or create a separate schooling system within a school. But the impetus for this policy has more to do with attempting to accommodate Maori demands rather than promoting the interests of the middle class. In part the reason for this may be that the middle class in New Zealand is already well catered for by the elite state single sex schools.

However, while aspects of *Tomorrow's Schools* are clearly more egalitarian, there are strong reservations that need to be posted. After all, its policies were inspired by New Right theories of educational administration and it is marked by them. For a start, it is not clear that the reforms will lead to increased participation precisely because the model used is that of private enterprise and as a result even greater powers than now exist could accrue to principals, and little paid time has been allowed for those appointed to school boards to do the work necessary to be properly informed of all the issues. Then, again, it is not clear that the government will adequately fund all schools under the bulk funding arrangements and in particular provide and maintain adequate compensatory funds for working class schools. *Tomorrow's Schools* does put in place an independent mechanism, the Review and Audit Agency, which can report to the government on the adequacy of its funding and indeed make its criticisms public. However, it remains to be seen how such a system will work in practice.

If we stand back and ask what are the possibilities and dangers inherent in the new system, then a number of points stand out. Where communities are united and clear in what they want, then these changes may address needs and demands which have not been articulated in the past. But the possibility for the state to divide and rule becomes much greater under this system. As Khan points out in his chapter it has been a characteristic of New Right governments to use the rhetoric of devolution while imposing greater control from the centre. One of the contradictions of the new decentralized administration is that by devolving power the state is in danger of losing control over educational processes. It therefore needs to reassert its power by other means and through a different set of justifications, such as ensuring uniformity of educational standards. Under *Tomorrow's Schools* such control can be asserted through the charter, the National Curriculum or through a system of national assessment, and so the state can exploit the apparent contradiction to tighten control and narrow educational options under the umbrella rhetoric of decentralization.¹⁴

Finally, there is the all important question of the context in which these reforms have been implemented, that is, one of high unemployment and

a New Right revolution whose language of 'consumers' and 'producers' has already permeated far into education.

Under these conditions the prospects for greater democracy and equality in education look grim. Yet in a climate of full employment and a public commitment to the democratization of society, it is possible to see how aspects of *Tomorrow's Schools* could be turned to progressive account. The papers in this collection begin this task by attempting to articulate some of the policies needed to develop a democratic education system and the problems such policies will encounter.

Notes

- 1 Clearly the relationships between the various groups which are oppressed are complex. Not all women and Maori are members of the working class, though in each case significant numbers are. This being so the focus of the seminar was on working class education. For an account of the demographics of the New Zealand class structure see Wilkes *et al.* (1987).
- 2 The Treasury's position was articulated in *Government Management, Vol II: Education* (1987).
- 3 It should be noted that the aims of equality and justice were to be achieved within the context of a mixed economy. From a Marxist perspective the brief of the Royal Commission would be considered incoherent because equality cannot be achieved under capitalism.
- 4 Many of the points made at the seminar were included in the final report of the Royal Commission.
- 5 Despite the short period of time given for debate over the Picot Report, 20000 submissions were made. These may have had an influence in bringing the teacher unions into the working parties. See the discussion below.
- 6 Originally the Royal Commission's brief was to be limited to looking at social security but its brief was widened suggesting something of a victory for the left.
- 7 The composition of the Royal Commission was also significant in that it was largely left-liberal in orientation. It included a prominent trade unionist and feminist, another involved in organizations for the disabled and disabled herself, a third woman had a strong history of involvement in community politics.
- 8 The impact of the consultants Brian Caldwell and Jim Spinks, co-authors of *The Self-Managing School* (1988), brought in to provide training for the new administrative structure should also be mentioned. Their work stressed the need for collaboration between teachers, principals and the community. By the same token, the contacts between the long period of time taken in Tasmania to implement school self-management, the equal number of teachers and parents on their schools' Boards of Trustees, did not escape the teacher unions' notice.
- 9 Surveys commissioned by the Royal Commission clearly show that a majority of people had confidence in the education system. This confidence was also reflected in the opinion polls of the time.
- 10 See Ball and Larsson (1989) for a discussion of policy importation and an attempt to press Sweden's case as a model of a democratic education system.

- 11 See Ball (1987) for the way in which principals can manipulate outcomes while appearing to 'consult' their staffs.
- 12 We are aware that the teacher unions may want to move towards more egalitarian work conditions but are at present struggling to maintain the crucial principle of national pay awards and conditions.
- 13 Of course, as Smith argues, despite the acknowledgement of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, bicultural education is not likely to become a feature of a Pakeha designed education system. Nevertheless, there is the potential now for greater community influence and action as regards education and Maori are aware of it.
- 14 The contradiction between devolution and centralized control is a two-edged sword that can be exploited by local communities as well as the state. Much of the defence of the autonomy of the tertiary sector, especially universities, is being fought out on the terrain established by this contradiction. More specifically universities are arguing against state interference on the grounds that autonomy has been devolved to them by the new administrative structures.

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Education and the Role of the State: Devolution and Control Post-Picot*

John Codd, Liz Gordon and Richard Harker

Traditionally, New Zealand Labour governments have occupied the high ground in matters of educational reform. Under previous Labour administrations, the system has undergone its most significant periods of innovation, development and expansion. New educational policies have been promoted and implemented primarily on the basis of their educational value, with fiscal effects receiving only minor, if any, consideration. As the education system has expanded, the role of the state as major funder and provider of education has been largely unchallenged. This situation, however, no longer prevails. Educational policy has been linked so closely to economic policy in recent times that any attempt to analyze the former without regard to the influences of the latter would be inevitably deficient. This raises a number of important issues concerning the inter relationship between the economic, political and cultural spheres of governmental activity. Any analysis of these issues, therefore, must examine contemporary theories of the state and its role in each of these spheres.

This chapter examines the political/economic conditions that appear to be shaping New Zealand educational policy. In particular, we argue that current educational policy directions enunciated in *Tomorrow's Schools* are indicative of a state that is facing dual crises of capital accumulation and legitimation. The central role of the state at present is clearly directed towards improving conditions for the accumulation of capital. However, the effects of this, particularly in terms of unemployment and reducing real wages, require the state to legitimate not only capital, but also the effects of its own policies on the production and maintenance of social inequality.

Our analysis rejects economic determinism and adopts a Gramscian position on the political role of the state similar to that developed in several recent neo-Marxist accounts (Habermas, 1976; Offe, 1984; O'Connor, 1984).

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These accounts have rejected the orthodox Marxist model in which the state is a mechanistic servant of capital reproduction and have reconceptualized the state as an 'independent' mediator between the economic imperatives of capital and the political imperatives of civil society. Within this more recently developed model, state education policies can be seen as attempts by agents of the state to deal with the complex and contradictory problems of fiscal management and political legitimation. In the current New Zealand situation, this becomes an attempt on the one hand to reduce or contain government expenditure, while on the other to produce educational policies which will address the legitimation problems stemming from youth unemployment and Maori underachievement. In this chapter we contend that the Picot Report's advocacy of economic efficiency and devolution and subsequent *Tomorrow's Schools* policy is a response to these conflicting imperatives and will have contradictory effects.

Theorizing the State

Although the state in contemporary society has become increasingly powerful and pervasive, surprisingly little attention has been given, until relatively recently, to developing adequate theories of its role and relationship to other aspects of society. Few would now disagree with Wolfe's claim that:

If state power is ever to be understood, the term itself must be brought back into existence; to resurrect the state is to make a political declaration about the centrality of organised political power in modern societies. (Wolfe, 1977, p. ix)

The virtual absence of theories of the state in educational policy analysis is largely a reflection of the liberal ideology within which such analysis is generally undertaken. This ideology embodies a political theory of possessive individualism, which has a long history within the Western intellectual tradition beginning with philosophers such as Hobbes and Locke (MacPherson, 1962). According to this view, the state comprises a set of institutions produced by the consensual collective actions of individuals in order to protect their general interests and to make provisions for common social goods such as education, defence and the protection of property. With the rise of capitalism, this liberal view of the state became more deeply entrenched. Carnoy and Levin (1985) summarize this trend as follows:

With Bentham and Mill in the early nineteenth century, 'classical' theories of the State, which had been premised on a relatively homogeneous rural society of smallholders, shifted to a utilitarian view of democracy that incorporated the newly emerged capitalist class structure and provided an intellectual rationale for it. Utilitarians adopted Adam Smith's argument in *The Wealth of Nations* that, because of the guiding 'invisible hand' of the market-place, unfettered

individual economic activity would maximise social welfare, that indeed there was no inconsistency between the unlimited pursuit of individual gain and social good, and that the State should thus limit itself only to the production of such public goods as defense, education, and the enforcement of laws. (p. 28)

During the twentieth century, mainly in response to economic crises in the accumulation of capital, the state has become more and more involved in the provision of services and in the operation of the economy. Different liberal economic theories have emerged to account for these developments. Keynesian theories are based upon the assumption that the market lacks the capacity to secure favourable profit conditions without regulatory state interventions, whereas monetarist theories assume that the accumulation process is self-regulating and therefore that the state should not intervene in the free market. Both these views, however, are considered by Marxist theorists to be false because they do not recognize the class-based nature of capitalist society.

Within the Marxist tradition, differing conceptions of the state have been advanced. The classical view, taken from Marx himself, defines the state as an essential means of class domination in a capitalist society (Carnoy, 1984, pp. 44-64). Within this view, the state is seen to be an instrument of the capitalist class, necessary to the maintenance of its control over the relations of production. Because of instability in the capitalist production process, giving rise to periodic crises of over- or under-production, the dominant class needs to extend its power to the state and its various agencies and institutions. Hence the primary role of the state is to avert, resolve or prevent the economic crises that are endemic to capitalist society.

For neo-Marxists, this orthodox economic view of the state is unable to explain sufficiently the complex functions of state institutions and the diverse effects of state policies in advanced capitalist societies. Nor can it explain adequately, in their view, the role of the state in relation to economic, political and social crises (O'Connor, 1987). In contrast to both liberal theories and the orthodox Marxist view,

... neo-Marxism stresses that politics and state policy are deeply enmeshed in modern capitalist accumulation. The deep inter-penetration between state and capital, policies and the market, means that modern 'political capitalism' is inexplicable in terms of conventional economic and political theory. Instead, it is argued that we need new kinds of political economic theories which explain economic crisis in relation to political processes and dynamics. (O'Connor, 1987: p. 127)

A major contributor to this new wave of state theory is Claus Offe (1984 and 1985) who has been influenced by the Frankfurt School, particularly Habermas (1976), and, to some extent, by Weber's analysis of bureaucracy. Offe (1984) argues that the modern capitalist state has two simultaneous

and often contradictory roles. These are (i) to support the process of capital accumulation (e.g. by providing transport systems, business subsidies, etc.); and (ii) to legitimate this role by maintaining electoral support and by endeavouring to enhance the value of labour (for example, through education and training policies) and to ameliorate the social costs of private accumulation (for example, through welfare policies, environmental protection policies etc.).

In performing these roles, the institutions of the state are 'independent' of any direct or systematic control by the capitalist class, but these institutions tend to support capitalist interests mainly because they are dependent upon capital accumulation for their continued existence. In other words, although the institutional form of the state is not determined by the interests of capital, state policies will tend to shape capitalist development and reproduce the capitalist mode of production. At the same time, however, the state also responds to and attempts to mediate a range of other political demands from various social movements and from state bureaucrats themselves. Thus, the political power of the state depends, indirectly, on the private accumulation of capital which, through taxation, provides the state with its resources. But to remain in power, the state must also be legitimate, that is it must maintain a certain level of popular support. This legitimation is achieved through the democratic processes of election and representation, and through the production of mass loyalty to the existing system of administrative and political power.

The capitalist welfare state, in Offe's view, 'seeks to implement and guarantee the *collective* interests of all members of a *class society, dominated by capital*' (Offe, 1984, p. 120). This means that state agencies and policies will tend to have contradictory purposes. Some policies have the purpose of redistributing resources to various groups who are systematically disadvantaged by market exchange processes while, at the same time, other policies have the primary purpose of supporting the commodity production and exchange relationships of the capitalist economy. Such an economy works most effectively, according to Offe, when all forms of both capital and labour power take on the *commodity form*, i.e. are able to be exchanged within an open and unrestricted market.

Problems arise within the capitalist economy when values cease to exist in the commodity form. This occurs when there is over-production of certain goods or when conditions of unemployment prevent the free exchange of labour power. Such problems lead to interventions by the state which in turn tend to paralyze further the commodity form of value. For example, during conditions of high youth unemployment, the state intervenes with work-skill training programmes (for example, Access programmes) not to provide the necessary labour power for certain industries, but to enhance the opportunities for the exchange value of labour. In order to achieve this, however, the state must channel resources (taxation) into supporting a vast training system (including the salaries of tutors and trainers) which is exempt from the commodity form. Thus, according to Offe, 'the state's attempts

to maintain and *universalize* the commodity form require organizations whose mode of operation is no longer subject to the commodity form' (Offe, 1984, p. 127). This produces a structural contradiction in state policies which adopt non-market or *decommodified* means for achieving specific social goals, while being dependent upon the processes of commodity production and exchange for their continued viability. Welfare state education policies have traditionally been fraught with this contradiction. Decommodified services (early childhood provisions, advisory and support services, special education agencies, etc.) have been developed and expanded on the basis of demand and educational value regardless of the capacity of the commodified economic sector to support such expansion.

Offe argues (*ibid.*, pp. 51–61) that the self-paralyzing and disorganizing tendencies of the capitalist economy necessitate regulatory state policies while, at the same time, threatening the effectiveness and fiscal viability of those policies. As the state's institutions extend their sphere of activity in order to sustain capitalist expansion, there is a parallel expansion of state budgets with increasing problems of fiscal management. The accumulation process depends upon the state to provide such forms of support as transportation and communication systems, subsidized energy resources, and research and development programmes. These costs are added to those arising from the provision of social services in health education and welfare, causing state expenditure to exceed state revenues and producing the familiar problem of persistent budget deficits. The borrowing and taxation capacities of the state then begin to cause serious contractions in the accumulation of capital, resulting in what O'Connor (1973) called 'the fiscal crisis of the state'. This crisis can be resolved only by savage reductions in state expenditure, but the policies required to bring this about tend to undermine mass loyalty, producing what Habermas (1976) and others have called a 'legitimation crisis'.

In neo-Marxist theory, 'legitimation crisis' is defined as the tendency of state institutions to lose popular political support and sometimes to invoke popular opposition and resistance. Legitimation is what persuades the mass of the population that the status quo is the common sense way to organize society: it converts power into authority. Traditionally, the free market economy is legitimated through common sense beliefs such as 'the protestant work ethic', but in advanced capitalism the legitimation of the state itself is maintained by what Habermas (1976) calls 'scientific-technical rationality'. Social institutions are rationalized by technical experts and political problems are converted into technical ones, with technical solutions. Hence, increasingly, people are being depoliticized, according to Habermas, because decisions are taken over by 'experts', and democracy is reduced to occasional choice between administrative teams.

Legitimation problems arise when state institutions cannot function normally and/or when they cannot inspire sufficient public confidence or loyalty. Clearly, this situation is more likely to arise at times of economic crisis because, as O'Connor (1987) points out:

... legitimisation depends on the capacity of the political system to secure a consensus of political policies from groups which either will not benefit or will be harmed by capitalist accumulation — a task which typically requires that policies be defined and presented to the 'public' in ways that conceal their true nature. (pp. 110–11)

Thus, a crisis of legitimisation will tend to coincide with a crisis of accumulation (especially where the latter is manifested as a fiscal crisis), further limiting the state's capacity to redistribute resources and opportunities. Wolfe suggests that this loss of legitimacy in advanced capitalist society 'reinforces public cynicism towards government', because of the 'basically correct' perception that the state only helps the rich. Thus, according to Wolfe (1977):

... the problem of legitimacy and problems of accumulation reinforce each other ... The legitimacy crisis is produced by the inability of the late capitalist state to maintain its democratic rhetoric if it is to preserve the accumulation function, or the ability to spur further accumulation if it is to be true to its democratic ideology. (p. 329)

This is a dilemma that we have seen clearly evidenced in New Zealand government policies of the late 1980s. The political storm over the sale of state assets is a prime example. What this illustrates is the close interdependence between the political dimensions of state policy and the wider economic conditions of a welfare capitalist society such as New Zealand. We want to argue, with reference to the *Tomorrow's Schools* policy, that this kind of analysis is useful for explaining the conditions that have shaped such a policy initiative. We shall go on to argue, however, that the state-capital relationship is less useful for explaining the cultural, social and political effects of such policies. At this point, we need to use the theories discussed so far to outline briefly the nature of the present crisis concerning the role of the state in New Zealand.

The Fiscal Crisis of the New Zealand State

Traditionally, New Zealand has had a highly interventionist state. This emerged in the nineteenth century in the absence of alternative institutions, such as an established church or a vigorous industrial sector. Increasingly, the state intervened in areas such as land reform, pensions, housing, health, insurance and labour protection. The first Labour government in 1935 consolidated the unique position of the state in New Zealand, increasing the numbers of state servants, intervening massively in such areas as public works, state housing, social security, land and forestry development, energy resources and support for import substituting manufacturers. Inexorable state expansion became the norm for generations of New Zealanders. However,

following the entry of Britain into the Common Market, and the oil crisis of the early 1970s, unemployment began to rise and the economy turned to deficit.

The solution to this was the ever more vigorous (and futile) application of Keynesian solutions, including subsidies to manufacturers and farmers, culminating in a prolonged wage-price freeze. By 1984, such policies were clearly exhausted and discredited, and we have seen since then a pendulum swing to the opposite extreme of a radical monetarism, attempting to disengage the state from many areas of the New Zealand economy and public life.

The dominant ideology guiding current state policies in New Zealand holds that increased government spending is a prime cause of the economic crisis. It is claimed that state employment is inherently 'unproductive' and stultifies economic growth by keeping taxation levels too high. The assumption is that lowering taxes increases the incentive for people to work harder and longer. Such claims do not recognize that the economic problem is not due to insufficient physical output per worker, but rather to a decline in surplus value production per worker. Describing the popular promotion of these doctrines in the United States, O'Connor (1987) comments as follows:

These views by monetarist and neo-classical economists were underpinned by the dogmatic belief that economic problems in the USA and the rest of the world were remediable through the normal mechanisms of the market. Unemployment, austerity, and a purge of the system's fat tissues, especially the heavy layer of 'unreal' popular expectations created by 'irresponsible' and 'weak' politicians and bureaucrats would 'create a new prosperity' (in Reagan's words). Government policy would be brought into line with these views on the causes and consequences of the economic crisis; the 'new' supply-side economics was transparently the ancient economics of *laissez faire*. (pp. 36-7)

The current fiscal crisis of the New Zealand state is fully described in the Treasury document, *Government Management* (1987). The figures show that 'total net government expenditure . . . has risen steadily as a share of GDP from 31.1 per cent in 1973/74 to reach 43.6 per cent in 1986/87' (Treasury, 1987, vol. 1, p. 223). This increase 'does not reflect an increased demand for real goods and services' (*ibid.*, p. 224) but it mainly reflects the growing cost of debt servicing and transfer payments to such areas as national superannuation and unemployment benefits. The effect has been a succession of fiscal deficits which have led to continued overseas borrowing and a situation in which New Zealand has become the fourth most indebted country in the OECD (p. 230). In attempting to contain this increasing fiscal crisis, the government has exercised stringent controls on all areas of state expenditure, including education, and more recently, has embarked upon

a programme of corporatization followed by privatization of a growing number of state institutions. Despite these policies of desperation, the fact remains that the 1988 budget produced a fiscal deficit (excluding asset sales) of \$1.4 billion.

Within these acute fiscal constraints, educational expenditure has the potential to generate intolerable political pressures. The National government's decision to implement 3 per cent 'cuts' in the late 1970s met with vigorous political resistance. Because these reductions in expenditure were specifically targeted by the Minister, the groups affected (women, teachers, WEA) were clearly identified and campaigns of resistance were promptly initiated.

During the early 1980s, the level of total expenditure on education could be contained by a situation in which reductions in class size and other qualitative improvements were offset by falling school rolls. During this same period, however, the cost of education per student has increased steadily (although unit costs fell artificially from 1983 to 1985 as a result of the two-year wage/price freeze). The figures indicate (see Table 2.1) that from 1986 on, the real expenditure per student, in both schools and the tertiary area, is again increasing. This is a situation which, in fiscal terms, for a monetarist government, cannot be sustained.

Table 2.1 Expenditure on education per student

Year ending 31 March	Expenditure (1987 dollars)		Per full-time equivalent technical institute student
	Per school student	Per full-time equivalent university student	
1961	1667		
1966	1791		
1971	2076		
1976	2791		
1981	2839	11264	9744
1982	2909	10777	9845
1983	2927	10786	9830
1984	2705	10449	9174
1985	2424	9317	8066
1986	2468	10122	8085
1987	2731	9731	8458

(Source: Treasury, 1987, vol. 2, p. 15)

As might be expected in light of the theories we have been discussing, policies adopted to deal with the fiscal crisis have accelerated what can be seen as a deepening legitimization crisis for the New Zealand state. Economic restructuring and corporatization policies have driven unemployment to record levels, caused severe problems of social dislocation, and generally increased inequalities between groups and communities. In these

circumstances, state institutions, especially the education systems, are unable to satisfy public expectations and they become predictable targets for frustration and anxiety. For the past decade in New Zealand, there have been expressions of concern by some pressure groups about such issues as declining educational standards, contentious curriculum developments, incompetent teachers, high levels of illiteracy, ineffective schools, inefficient bureaucrats, and a host of other perceived problems and deficiencies. More recently, the state education system has been strongly attacked also by the new monetarists. Until the 1980s, education was broadly identified as a means for generating the wealth of the nation. However, the monetarists have convinced many people that public expenditure on education is a drain on the nation's resources, keeping investment money away from the market and providing benefits mainly to the individuals who receive it rather than the nation as a whole. This argument was put forward in the Treasury's brief to the 1987 incoming government.

This Treasury document on 'Education Issues' (*Government Management*, 1987, vol. 2) presents a graphic account of an education system that is relentlessly squeezed between fiscal and political pressures. The analysis reveals a crisis in which state policy-makers, faced with absolute limitations of resources, can no longer meet public expectations and political demands for further extension and improvement of educational provision. As the Treasury brief points out:

In recent years a number of pressures on the state system have become discernible. They are not just pressures for more and better of the same (such pressures always exist), but for different types of education service and, in some respects, a different kind of education structure. (Treasury, 1987, vol. 2, p. 15)

Given these pressures, and the political acceptance of fiscal constraints argued for by Treasury, it is predictable that the responses of state policy-makers will be fraught with underlying contradictions. This is indeed the case with *Tomorrow's Schools* and the Picot Report which preceded it. These documents, we contend, should be interpreted within the context of their production. They are ideological texts that can be used to legitimate political decisions that will effectively reduce educational expenditure and fragment existing structures and patterns of interest representation. The main effect, we argue, will be to reduce pressures upon the state for continued expansion and improvement of educational provision and to decentralize and disorganize the existing arena of political contestation as it relates to education.

The Picot Report: Context, Contradictions and Consequences

Following the general election in August 1987, the Prime Minister, David

Lange, assumed the education portfolio with a declaration that the reform of education was to be high on the government's agenda during its second term of office. Over the next few months, reference was made to earlier Labour governments' achievements in the area of education but very little reference was made to any of the initiatives taken by the former Minister in his own government, Russell Marshall. It was noticeable, in particular, that the new Minister made no commitment to implementation of *The Curriculum Review*, although frequent mention was made of the anticipated Picot Report. Early in 1988, the Minister stated in an interview that he personally had 'thought of Picot to do the review' (Booth, 1988, p. 60). Clearly, this was before he had even assumed the education portfolio, as the Task Force to Review Education Administration, chaired by Picot, was announced on 21 July 1987, prior to the election.

The fate of *The Curriculum Review* is particularly significant in the events surrounding the establishment of the Picot task force. It had been released in April 1987 after nearly two years of community consultation and extensive debate about the aims and purposes of education. It was received positively and viewed as a reformist document, especially by people on the political left, but it made very little reference to economic implications (Codd, 1988). Conservative groups were either openly critical of the *Review's* ideology or expressed strong reservations about the feasibility of its recommendations. The Treasury produced a highly critical report which they sent to the Minister of Finance on 29 May 1987. The covering letter first stated that:

The curriculum review is liable to form the basis for developments in schools over the next ten years. It seeks to increase community involvement in schooling, increase the flexibility of the curriculum and broaden the role of the school in the community. Emphasis is given to meeting Maori aspirations, countering racism and sexism and creating an enabling and challenging curriculum.

Having described the potential of the *Review* in these terms, the letter then stated:

However, Treasury feel the review would not be an adequate blue print for the development of school education because it:

- holds unstated and narrow assumptions as to the nature and sources of education;
- overlooks issues as to: community and educational values and benefits, the relationship between education and the economy, and the nature of government assistance;
- does not tackle issues of management and consumer choice.

Less than two months after the Minister of Finance received this letter, and just prior to the general election, the Picot Task Force was announced. Its terms of reference set an agenda in which two concepts were to be central: devolution and efficiency. All matters relating to curriculum or the nature

of teaching and learning were excluded. The task force was requested to report directly to the Ministers of Education, Finance and State Services and it was specifically asked to 'identify any costs and benefits of its recommendations and recommend the nature and timing of any necessary transitional arrangements' (Picot Report, 1988, p. ix).

How much influence Treasury had in the preparation and writing of the Picot Report is a matter for further research, but it should be noted that a Treasury officer was seconded to the task force as one of its part-time secretaries. It should also be noted that the Treasury released its own document on education towards the end of 1987, before the task force would have commenced writing its report. A careful analysis and comparison of the two texts reveals some interesting similarities.

The Treasury's analysis identifies three issues which are said to underlie recent public concerns about education. The first is the issue of *choice* which is juxtaposed against 'state direction'. The second is the issue of *equity* which is linked to funding and what is called the 'middle-class capture effect'. The third issue is *efficiency* which is linked to 'levels of performance'.

By couching the issues in this way, Treasury's ideological agenda is revealed. It is an agenda in which equity becomes redefined in individualistic consumerist terms (user-pays) and the role of the state is reduced to that of guarantor of individual rights and liberties. There is no doubt that the same ideology lies behind the Picot statement that:

... we see the creation of more choice in the system as a way of ensuring greater efficiency and equity. (Picot Report, 1988, p. 4)

This assumption that equity can be achieved by increasing individual choice and the further assumption 'that nearly everyone will have a genuine commitment to doing the best job possible for all learners' (*ibid.*) are central to the Picot rationale for devolution. It is a rationale that has the same ideological origins as the rationale given by Treasury for reducing the state's role in education. Indeed, the full weight of monetarist doctrine lurks behind Treasury's statement that:

... government intervention is liable to reduce freedom of choice and thereby curtail the sphere of responsibility of its citizens and weaken the self-steering ability inherent in society to reach optimal solutions through the mass of individual actions pursuing free choice without any formal consensus. (Treasury, 1987, vol. 2, p. 41)

This 'free market' ideology readily coheres with some popular common sense beliefs about government interference in the lives of individuals. It can become, therefore, a powerful source of legitimisation. To this end, the Picot Report begins with a highly critical description of the education system, endorsing the popular belief that all bureaucracy is inherently and fundamentally bad. The Report presents a cynical and highly negative image of a system which is alleged to be inflexible, unresponsive and weighed down

with unnecessary rules and regulations. It suggests that the bureaucracy is largely self-serving and that most of the rules and procedures governing the allocation and use of resources exist only to frustrate or prevent decision-making at the level of individual institutions. The Report proposes, therefore, that as far as possible, all such rules and procedures should be abolished and each institution should be given discretion over how it spends its funds. The proposal that the Ministry of Education dispense a bulk grant annually to the Board of Trustees of each institution subsequently became central to the *Tomorrow's Schools* policy.

Thus, the rationale for devolution is that it produces greater flexibility and responsiveness, but it also produces a structure in which decisions can be more effectively controlled. This latter outcome is implicit in Picot but it is made explicit in the Treasury document, where it states that:

With central planning, mistakes tend to be excessively costly and impact on everyone, with few alternatives being available when things go wrong. The bounded rationality of central planners and the complexity of the world creates strains for the relative efficacy of centrally determined solutions. (Treasury, 1987, vol. 1, p. 42)

The new structure entails a devolution of decision-making in a wide range of administrative areas, including resource allocation, staff appointments, support services and staff development. Boards of Trustees are given some discretion in these areas but control is firmly invested in the two central state agencies: the Ministry itself, and the Review and Audit Agency. This control is to be manifested, not in the form of directives, but in the form of tightly circumscribed limits and constant surveillance.

Removing formal administrative structures from the local and district level produces a situation in which highly centralized control is exercised through legal contracts, in the form of institutional charters, and regular review and auditing processes. In this way, the state can more effectively control educational expenditure in the form of bulk grants, while shifting responsibility for the way funds are spent to the institutional level. Most public dissatisfaction with education, therefore, is to be vented at the local level and thus diverted from central government. The legitimization crisis is transported downwards.

Another implication of this strategic manoeuvre is that pressures for increased expenditure in education can no longer be as readily applied through established channels at the national level. The new structure effectively removes most of the institutional routes by which claims have been made on central government for qualitative improvements in education. Teacher organizations, for example, can no longer press for reduced class sizes, more professional support, curriculum resources or in-service training. Responsibility for these matters is to reside in each institution.

What is it then about Picot and *Tomorrow's Schools* that is different from most other educational policies? In Offe's terms, it is a 'structural' as opposed

to a 'conjunctural' policy. A 'structural policy' is one that:

... follows the imperative of keeping output constant, that is at levels that are considered reasonable or affordable, while channelling demand inputs in a way that appears compatible with available resources. (Offe, 1985, p. 224)

Such policies are based upon a different form of political rationality from the more common 'conjunctural' policies which 'seek to maximize the adequacy of policy responses to problems as they emerge and appear on the agenda' (*ibid.*, p. 226). Policies to expand early childhood provisions, to reduce pupil/teacher ratios, to introduce bilingual schools, to increase student teacher intakes, are all examples of 'conjunctural' policies.

Whereas 'conjunctural' policies intervene in order to satisfy demands or anticipate developments, 'structural' policies aim to shape and channel demands 'so as to make them satisfiable' (*ibid.*, p. 225). Structural policies, according to Offe,

... are adopted in response to conditions of economic and institutional crises. In response to such crises, the physical and economic parameters of production and the institutional parameters of interest representation, which together constitute the nature of the problem, become subject to redesign. The shift is from policy output and economic demand management to the shaping of political input and economic supply — from 'state intervention' to 'politicization'. (Offe, 1985, p. 226)

Offe argues that a shift from 'conjunctural' to 'structural' policies 'has been a dominant trend in advanced capitalist nations since the late sixties' (*ibid.*).

As a 'structural' policy, *Tomorrow's Schools* represents a strategic response to the fiscal crisis of the New Zealand state. If it succeeds, its major effects would be (i) to give the central agencies of the state more control over economic supply and political demand; and (ii) to shift the locus of legitimation problems away from central government. However, because of the contradictions inherent in the policy itself, particularly the contradiction between choice and equity, there is a very real prospect that it will fail. Its failure would inevitably lead to a further deepening of the legitimation crisis. In a characteristically elliptical way, Habermas points to the dilemma, when he comments that:

... a legitimation crisis can be avoided in the long run only if the latent class structures of advanced-capitalist societies are transformed or if the pressure for legitimation to which the administrative system is subject can be removed. (Habermas, 1976, p. 93)

Tomorrow's Schools will certainly not change the latent class structures of New Zealand society; it remains to be seen whether it can remove the pressure for legitimation.

State, Capital and Civil Society

The discussion to this point has focused on state policy formation and the political/economic conditions that have produced a policy such as *Tomorrow's Schools*. Drawing upon the theories of Offe, Habermas and O'Connor, we have argued that it represents a policy response to the dual crises of accumulation and legitimation. Because these theories focus primarily on the state-capital relationship, they have proven useful in examining the dynamics of policy production, but they are clearly limited when it comes to considering the social/political effects of a policy such as *Tomorrow's Schools*. What this requires is a theoretical framework which embraces all spheres of society and which explains why certain state policies will produce political contestation or resistance. In this final section of the paper, we shall outline a Gramscian framework for such analysis, which recognizes the complex interrelationship between the state, capital and civil society.

Most neo-Marxist theorists have been influenced in one way or another by Gramsci but few have examined the intricacies and subtleties of his theory of the state. Essentially, Gramsci argued that the state cannot be understood independently of *civil society*. In reconstructing a Gramscian notion of civil society from the numerous scattered comments in his writing, Simon describes it as:

... all the 'so-called private' organizations such as churches, trade unions, political parties and cultural associations which are distinct from the process of production and from the coercive apparatuses of the state. All the organizations which make up civil society are the result of a complex network of social practices and social relations . . . (Simon, 1982, p. 69)

From a Gramscian perspective then, a capitalist society is composed of three sets of social relations:

- 1 the relations of production (capital-labour);
- 2 the coercive relations of the state (the term 'political society' is used for the coercive relations in the state apparatuses); and
- 3 all other relationships that make up civil society. (*ibid.*)

It is in his use of the concept of *hegemony* that Gramsci is able to maintain both a contrast and a continuity between these sets of relationships. According to Carnoy (1984, pp. 69-70), Gramsci's concept of hegemony has two principal meanings. At one level, it is 'a process within civil society whereby a fraction of the dominant class exercises control through its moral and intellectual leadership over other allied fractions of the dominant class' (*ibid.*, p. 70). At another level, hegemony 'involves the successful attempts of the dominant class to use its political, moral, and intellectual leadership to establish its view of the world as all-inclusive and universal, and to shape the interests and needs of subordinate groups' (*ibid.*). Thus, hegemony is not an alternative

to coercion but it is a synthesis of consent and coercion, taking different forms, and extending throughout both the state and civil society.

Carnoy suggests that:

... the function of hegemony in civil society, where the ideological apparatuses are much less obvious, and therefore much more effective in mystifying the dominance of class rule, differs from the State's hegemonic apparatuses, which are much more apparent in their reproductive role, especially since they carry coercion's armour (the juridical system and the school, for example). (*ibid.*, p. 73)

Thus schools are prime examples of institutions that manifest both the coercive relations of the state (for example, compulsory attendance, core curriculum, national credentials) and the hegemonic relations of civil society (for example, pedagogy, reward systems, hierarchies). They cannot be said to 'belong' in one sphere or the other; schools are institutional constituents of both the state and civil society (Codd, Harker and Nash, 1985).

The recognition that the relations of domination are the same in both the state and civil society led Gramsci to the following major proposition:

... by 'state' should be understood not only the apparatus of government, but also the 'private' apparatus of 'hegemony' or civil society. (Gramsci, 1971, p. 261)

This he came to call the *integral state*, i.e. 'hegemony protected by the armour of coercion' (*ibid.*, p. 262). Thus, Gramsci distinguishes the state from civil society, but then brings them together in his notion of the integral state.

According to Simon, this ambiguity within Gramsci's theory of the state arises because he uses the term 'state' in its everyday use, and as a synonym for power. Gramsci sought to explain why capturing the 'political' state did not in itself change the basis of power within society. Gramsci's argument is that:

... the social relationships of civil society are relations of power just as much (though in a different way) as are the coercive relations of the state. A hegemonic class exercises power over subordinate classes in civil society in addition to state power which it exercises through its predominance in the state. (Simon, 1982, p. 72)

This Gramscian analysis raises important questions about the social effects of a policy such as *Tomorrow's Schools* which shifts certain aspects of the administration of schools from the central agencies of the state to small organizational units within civil society in the form of Boards of Trustees. The declaration that each board should 'properly reflect the composition of its community' is based upon assumptions that are contradicted by social realities. The fact is that in an unequal society particular kinds of competence, including administrative skills, are distributed unequally among individuals and between communities.

Bourdieu's concept of 'cultural capital' is relevant here (Harker, 1985). Just as economic resources are distributed unequally, so too are cultural resources and some kinds of cultural competence bestow social power upon those who have that competence. The power of a small formally organized group such as a Board of Trustees would be derived from the cultural capital of its members. Predictably, therefore, in a situation where learning institutions are in competition with each other some will dominate over others.

By removing bureaucratic administrative structures from the local and district level, *Tomorrow's Schools* effectively reduces the coercive power which can enable the state to protect some of the interests of less powerful groups. Without these structures, the forces of hegemonic domination in civil society are given a free rein. Although institutional charters are intended to have coercive force, by placing boundaries on areas of discretion, these too will be cultural texts, open to interpretation and with hegemonic effects.

Any comprehensive analysis of such a policy should consider not only the political context of its production but also the social context of its implementation. Drawing on Gramscian concepts, we can begin to develop a theory which recognizes the state's central role in the reproduction of the relations of production without restricting that explanation to a form of economic reductionism. The theory we are suggesting identifies the state as a sphere of political activity with its own dynamic, influenced but not determined by the dynamic of capital, and also influenced by the dynamics of various political forces and coalitions located within civil society (Dale, 1983).

This gives us a theoretical framework which defines the role of the state in terms of *limits* and *capacity*. The notions of the limits and capacity of the state recognize the plural pressures that arise from the state's location in a contradictory and unstable mode of production, a social context of conflicting cultural forms resulting both from the relations of production and the demands of non-dominant groups, and its own political sphere with agendas that are often blatantly 'political' and bear little resemblance to capital's 'needs'. Whilst the capitalist mode of production clearly both influences and constrains all of these spheres, we cannot understand the politics of education without examining the limits which each sphere sets on the others, the capacity of the state to ensure consent for its own agenda, and the nature of the hegemonic settlement within civil society (Gordon, 1989).

As Jessop (1983) notes, as long as capitalism continues, we know by definition that there is an 'economically dominant' class. But this does not tell us:

... whether capital (or one of its fractions) enjoys political, intellectual and moral hegemony. Given the possibilities for dislocation between economic domination and/or economic hegemony and hegemony in broader terms, these issues can only be settled in the light of specific

overdetermined conjunctures. Clearly only concrete analyses of concrete situations will resolve these issues. (p. 106)

The notion of limits refers to all those aspects of the state that prevent it from acting in its own interests. These limits originate in the state's relations to both capital and civil society; it is limited by its very position *within* civil society. The central contradiction for the state is that, while it must work for its own reproduction, it must at the same time appear to be working as a popular-democratic state, that is in the interests of 'the people' (however these are conceived); and also for the reproduction of the mode of production (for example, in education it must provide vocationally oriented courses if these are demanded by the labour-market).

Conclusion

The role of the state in the current crisis has been to maintain the existing power relations enshrined within the education system, while dramatically altering the fiscal and bureaucratic 'inputs'. This has required a re-ordering and restructuring of agencies within the state, through the abolition of regional bodies and the conversion of the central Department of Education into a Ministry.

The ideological justification for the reform of educational administration obscures the reality that the hegemonic power relations have been merely relocated from the central state towards the boundary of state/civil society, that is the individual school in its local community. The establishment of the Review and Audit Agency, which must be seen, in Offe's terms, as a coercive agency, is there to ensure that any deviations from the existing power relationships do not occur. Thus, the state remains, finally, as guardian of existing social relations.

The structural reorganization of the administration of education must be understood, then, as a response to crises occurring in other sectors of society, underpinned by particular ideological views of the role of the state. Few of the explanations that have been given for these changes, for example, more choice, parent-power, simplification of administration, clearer lines of accountability, etc., actually reflect the real changes that have taken place. The deep economic crisis of the state and the government's monetarist response to it have placed severe limits on state action in education, and have necessitated the structural reforms contained in *Tomorrow's Schools*. At the same time, the capacity of the state has been constrained by the ideological rhetoric of the free market that has emanated from Treasury and permeated the bureaucracy.

We have argued that *Tomorrow's Schools* is the product of a particular set of historical, economic and political forces. It is a policy that has been formed at a time when the New Zealand state's capacity to promote

redistributive policies is severely limited by a crisis of capital accumulation. Behind an ideological 'free market' rhetoric of devolution and efficiency, we have a policy that will tighten the state's control over educational expenditure, shift the arena of political contestation towards the periphery of civil society, and exacerbate the problem of 'middle class capture'. It heralds a new era of hegemonic domination in New Zealand schools.

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Education, Democracy and the Crisis of the Welfare State

Hugh Lauder

... democracy, by definition, cannot mean merely that an unskilled worker can become skilled. It must mean that every 'citizen' can 'govern' and that society places him, even if only abstractly, in a general condition to achieve this. (Gramsci, 1978)

Section 1

Democracy and equality are not words in currency these days, having been marginalized by the rhetoric of competition and efficiency and all it entails in terms of the authoritarian practices of the 'free' market and the 'new' managerialism. But the new rhetoric and its accompanying practices promise very little for most New Zealanders. Unemployment, increasing crime and disaffection with public institutions are not the temporary by-products of free market policies, rather theory and experience suggest they are integral to them. In other words, the current market-liberal experiment in New Zealand is not a solution at all, rather it is part of the problem.

In this chapter I want to suggest that we cannot develop adequate alternatives to the problems now besetting this society unless we look at economic, social, educational and political policy in an integrated way. This approach stands in stark contrast to government policy which has assumed that once the economy was fixed up then social and educational policy could be attended to. In itself this approach is telling because it signals the route this government has chosen to take: one where the demands of economic efficiency have been divorced from those of social justice. However, the experience of societies such as Sweden suggests that there is an alternative response to the current economic crisis which combines economic efficiency and social justice by linking democracy and equality through a strong concept of citizenship.

Such a concept has immediate implications for the way we view the welfare state and the distribution of power within the economy. It also

suggests that a fundamental aim of education should be to help create citizens for a participatory democracy. To talk in these terms is, of course, unfashionable yet it should be clear to all that unless we find a new approach to economic, social and educational policy the social problems now being created will multiply.

However, it would be idealistic to argue for a particular approach to social and educational policy unless it was grounded in an analysis of the economic and political constraints that now face us. One way of examining these constraints is to ask why a Labour government has embraced the doctrines and orientations of the New Right. To put it another way how is it possible for a view such as this:

An economy characterised by greater competition might well improve in absolute terms the position of the poorest individual in it, but if it does so by widening the gap between poverty and privilege it has nothing to commend it. If the surplus generated by a competitive economy is distributed in accordance with the values of self-interest, the object of equality of opportunity which is the hallmark of social democracy will be defeated.¹

to be corrupted so rapidly?

The question needs answering at two levels: at an ideological level we need to ask what conceptual weaknesses allowed the kind of position articulated above to be abandoned so easily. At a political level we need to examine the forces which have led the present administration to adopt a right-wing position rather than, for example, a democratic-socialist direction. It is only by asking these questions that we can realistically appraise the possibilities for an alternative policy direction — and in particular one centred on the concept of democratic citizenship.

In the second section of this chapter the social democratic concept of citizenship as it has developed in societies like New Zealand and Britain will be critically examined. Here I shall argue that it is an inherently flawed view of citizenship whose weaknesses have been reproduced in the organization of the welfare state and education, with the result that both sets of institutions have been unable to defend themselves from a concerted attack by the right. In the third section I shall articulate a more robust concept of democratic citizenship and ask what kind of schooling is most appropriate for it. Education, however, does not stand on its own and if the aim of democratic citizenship is to be fulfilled a strong welfare state is required. Therefore section 4 examines the kind of economic and welfare state arrangements needed to support a strong notion of citizenship. Attending to this question will bring us to a consideration of the dilemmas now confronting any left-of-centre party in New Zealand. Here I shall argue that the contradictions which are now so manifest within the Labour Party can only be resolved in the long term through the development of economic and industrial democracy. The

alternative is that the Labour Party remains a right-wing party with all that implies for the disenfranchizing of large sectors of the New Zealand electorate.

Section 2

In New Zealand, as in Britain, state intervention in welfare and education can be characterized by two broad aims: to deliver a level of social security, broadly construed, sufficient to alleviate poverty and maintain an individual's dignity, and to promote equality of opportunity.

Some ten years ago W.H. Oliver, in writing on the history of the welfare state in New Zealand, characterized the values underlying welfare provision until the mid-1930s as follows:

The sanctity of benevolence, the classification into deserving and undeserving, the zeal for external discipline where self-discipline was lacking — these three values were deeply implanted in the welfare provisions of the pre-war period . . . The hesitant extensions of the 1920s and the desperate improvisations of the early 1930s reflect something of their continuing power . . . The difference (for the first Labour government), and it is a very large one, lay in its realisation that the deserving included those whose efforts at self-support had been negated by the malign effects of a faulty economic system. (Oliver, 1977, p. 9)

However, Oliver goes on to say of that Labour government and the changes it wrought, 'The informing spirit had clearly altered, but one can be more sure that something new had been added than that something old had passed away'.² In his opinion the welfare state erected by the first Labour government represents a development rather than a decisive break with previous philosophy and practice.

I believe Oliver is right about this because there are good grounds for arguing that the philosophy underlying welfare developments to date has been informed not by socialist principles but by those of an enlightened liberal individualism. The thinking behind this enlightened liberalism, which was forged at the end of the nineteenth century as a result of political pressure and struggle, has been characterized by Freedman (1978) as follows:

Liberalism was still concerned with the optimal expression and development of the individual but this was obtainable by reflecting the scientific and ethical truth that man could only realise himself in a community, rather than through a human organisation tending toward theoretical anarchy. A new trust emerged in social action via the state — not as a necessary evil but as the just and right way of attaining human ends. (p. 257)

In contrast to the laissez faire variety of liberalism which emphasized the

need to minimize state intervention and thereby 'maximize' individual freedom, the new liberalism aimed for a delicate balance between production and consumption, wealth and welfare. The aim was to generate a new concept of citizenship which was largely defined negatively in terms of keeping the ills of poverty and some of the uncertainties of the economic world from the door. In New Zealand this view was supplemented by a set of positive benefits that welfare state intervention was thought to bring but they were noticeably of a private kind relating to family life.³ As the Labour Party's election policy document put it, the party's objective was to use the country's resources:⁴

First: For the purpose of restoring a decent living standard to those who have been deprived of essentials . . . Second: to organise an internal economy that will distribute the production and services in a way that will guarantee to every person able and willing to work an income sufficient to provide him and his dependents with everything necessary to make a 'home' and 'home life' in the best sense of the meaning of those terms.

Where people within this internal economy were too poor to help themselves, the welfare state would intervene. As Savage put it:

There is no way of dealing with poverty except by getting to the people who are poorly paid, poorly housed, and poorly fed and who cannot reach the main facilities for education and medical services.⁵

However, from its inception this concept of citizenship was weakened by some 'old' liberal assumptions which sat uneasily alongside the optimism of the 'new' liberal doctrines. Then, as now, the social justification for state intervention had to be leavened with the argument that welfare provisions would create a healthier and more productive workforce. Freedon (1978) notes that:

The age was, however, also one in which efficiency had a magic ring . . . Even for liberals who perceived the dangerous undertones of this doctrine, it was convenient to demonstrate that their social philosophy could also . . . score on this account and meet the test of 'business' considerations. (pp. 240-1)

In contrast to this new liberal view of welfare state intervention in New Zealand, and indeed in Britain, some Western societies have seen the role of welfare state provision quite differently, notably France and the Scandinavian countries, particularly Sweden. A recent historian of the development of welfare states has observed for these countries:

Social policies were not simply governmental functions, but efforts to enhance the participatory function of . . . politics to create associational links, and to enable the less able to become fully active, responsible members of society.⁶

Implicit in the theory behind Sweden's welfare policy for example, in contrast to New Zealand's, were two additional links between the individual and society which created a far stronger concept of citizenship. Firstly, welfare provision was tied directly to the idea that it enabled democratic participation. Secondly, it was appreciated that social solidarity could not be seen as solely created by an adequate home life, in particular it rested on wage solidarity. Central to this idea was the concept of a social wage which provided security and sustenance for wage labourers as a guarantee against the risks of being employed in a market economy.

Similarly, the social wage was considered essential to the labour movement as a whole since the unity of the movement could be threatened by the unemployed if they did not receive an adequate social wage to compensate for their loss of income. The concept of wage solidarity represented the essence of a socialist welfare state because it de-commodified wage labour and provided universal entitlements on the basis of the redistribution of wealth. But in contrast to Sweden, the theorizing underpinning New Zealand practice has not been concerned, explicitly, to relate the issue of political citizenship to the problems capitalism poses for wage earners. The rationale for a minimum wage in New Zealand has always been in terms of alleviating individual poverty, etc.

Overall, I think it is fair to summarize the difference between the Swedish and New Zealand cases as this, that in the former the development of a comprehensive social policy was based on the assumptions of social radicalism whereas in the latter case social policy has been predicated on the 'new' liberal assumption of the private well-being of the individual.

If this is correct, then the flaws in the welfare state which have helped recent New Right initiatives to gain so much ground are understandable. For so long as disadvantage is seen in essentially private terms unrelated to the social and political health of a society, then it is so much more possible to provide a rationale for reducing welfare intervention to a minimum. Such a view is the antithesis of a democratic orientation to welfare because its aim ultimately is simply one of charity and social control — to keep the 'disadvantaged' quiescent.⁷ The main instrument, of course, for doing this is targeting. This is a point to which I shall return.

I now want to turn to the second aim of the New Zealand welfare state, that of equality of opportunity. Ever since Peter Fraser's famous dictum to the effect that everyone, regardless of social background, has a right to a free education, the notion of equality of opportunity has been a foundation of state education in New Zealand. It is the other side of the social welfare coin in that it allows for the idea that everyone has the opportunity for a stake in the wealth and rewards of this society. But again we should be aware of the liberal individualistic basis to this concept. As Ken Jones (1983) has put it recently in the British context but which is equally applicable to New Zealand:

Equal opportunity has been the motivating slogan of Labour's

programme, without significant challenge for fifty years. As a precise set of demands, it has gone through many mutations but its core meaning remains: equal access for all social classes to education, so as to equalise the occupational chances of the individuals who comprise those classes . . . [It] is conventionally presented as *the* expression of working class educational aims, as if it summed up the wisdom and experience of the class. In fact like most other political ideologies, it achieved its dominance only after successfully contesting other objectives and strategies. It became the decisive — almost the sole — influence on Labour party policy . . . (p. 52)

Jones' general point about the effect of this victory for the concept of equality of opportunity is that it blunted radical working class educational aspirations and replaced them with individual educational aspirations which proved divisive:

It not only discourages any attempt to define educational purpose in terms of the advancement of the class as a whole, but it also fosters a positive hostility between individual educational betterment and collective advance. (*ibid.*)

Now the claim of equality of opportunity centred on its ability to promote justice, harmony and efficiency; justice and harmony because everyone would have an equal chance to succeed, and efficiency since the most able would rise to the most responsible positions in society. As such the crucial issue on which its legitimacy turned was working class access to a ruling class education. The class structure would remain and so would the structure of knowledge which helped to keep it in place, but individuals would have the opportunity to move from one class location to another.

There are several of points to make about the traditional interpretation of equality of opportunity. Firstly, it only finds application within an inegalitarian and hence hierarchical society and in particular the interrelated hierarchies of class and bureaucracy. Secondly, the aim of equality of opportunity is contradictory precisely because it is asking students from a working class cultural background to compete equally with those from ruling and middle class backgrounds in a school context which has been determined by the middle and ruling classes. In other words, the competition is inherently unfair and it has produced the not surprising outcome that working class students, even when they have a similar scholastic ability, do not perform as well at school as their middle and ruling class counterparts (Lauder and Hughes, 1989; Lauder, Hughes and Taberner, 1985).

The problem, however, of inequality and wastage of talent is not the state education system's alone, as some recent critics of it have alleged (Treasury, 1987) but is a problem of the school-society *relationship*. Schools do not create class structures, economic systems do that — in our case it is the authoritarian nature of the capitalist system and a discriminatory labour market which generate inequality (Giddens and McKenzie, 1982). What

schools do is abet the inequalities created by the economic system through their own hierarchical structures and through the transmission of knowledge and culture which are alien to many working class students.⁸

The antidote to inequality is democracy and what I want to do now is outline a view of the structure and content of democratic schooling and show how it directly addresses the question of working class inequality.

Section 3

Democratic schooling rests on the pillars of participatory democracy, solidarity, critical self-understanding, an integrated curriculum and the principles we normally associate with a comprehensive education, mixed ability teaching and delayed selection. Each of these elements is described below.

Democratic schooling needs to inform three levels of power within the formal education system: the school-community relationship, the within-school organization and the curriculum. Moreover, the three levels need to be related through a central democratically organized policy-making body.

Successful schools, as Ramsay *et al.* (1983) have shown, need the support and involvement of the communities they serve and particularly parents. Currently there are two models of parent participation on offer. The first and best advertized is the market model of the New Right. Here schools are seen as competing against one another for the patronage of parents who, as in any other market, are seen as consumers. It is assumed in this model that parents consider achieving high credentials as most important for their children. So schools that are good at producing highly credentialled students will be in demand and schools that are not will redouble their efforts to improve their credential output for fear of being closed down. There are, of course, many arguments against importing a market system into education (Snook, 1987; Lauder *et al.*, 1988). But here I want to draw attention to one major drawback to this model — it fails to *involve* parents. For once the initial decision has been made as to which school parents send their child, no further involvement with the school is necessary.⁹ Consistent with a market model, involvement is limited to the sphere of *consumption* and parents are only invited to choose among a number of educational options; they are not considered as necessary to the *production* of education.

But if working class students are to achieve in education they need the active involvement of their parents in the life of the school. Again Ramsay's research is instructive here because the successful schools he studied devised curricula in consultation with their communities and as a result they reflected the cultural values and aspirations of the community.

In this way education becomes a reciprocal affair, parents can lend their skills and experience to the school and in turn they learn what the school has to offer them and their children. Rather than being an outpost of a white

middle class empire, schools become an organic part of the community they serve.

Consistent with such an organic approach to community participation is the notion of participatory democratic school organization. If we are to educate students for democratic citizenship, then it is a clear requirement of schools that they be democratic institutions (White, 1986). If we persist with hierarchical structures, we promote the idea, through the hidden curriculum, that social life is composed of hierarchies — typically dominated by men. Under such conditions what schools teach students is to 'know their place'. And for working class students that effectively means 'knowing their place' at the bottom of society. In other words, hierarchies and the perpetuation of inequalities are closely related. This connection can best be brought out by considering a distinction drawn by Pat White (1986) between self-esteem and self-respect.

The former, fashionable, concept refers to a psychological state in which one has a good opinion of oneself and is confident about one's abilities, while the latter concept is tied into the social and institutional structures which order our lives. As she puts it:

The democratic conception of self-respect ... is based on a conception of oneself as a moral person with certain moral rights, one of which is to be treated as an equal, and moral duties, with responsibilities for one's actions ... If an authority structure is to be morally acceptable, it must foster people's self-respect, not diminish it or worse. (p. 97)

To bring this distinction alive and to show its educational importance, consider that infamous group of school resisters — Willis' lads.¹⁰ They have considerable self-esteem created by their skill in using others for their own purposes and by their streetwise knowledge of how the world 'really works'. To them the world is a matter of dog eat dog and they use school as a forum for their racism and sexism in the cause of 'having a laugh'. In White's meaning of the term they lack self-respect because they do not treat themselves or others as moral persons with equal rights. They have power created, in part, by the breakdown of social order and, in part, by the authoritarian structure of the school. They refuse to acknowledge 'their place' in the school because in its structure and goals it carries no positive meaning for them: it merely holds out empty liberal promises for equality of opportunity. To accept 'their place' in this alien environment would be to accept that they were socially impotent. So they resist what they see as the oppressive demands of the school and, in so doing, they preserve their self-esteem but lose self-respect.

But in this process they also lose any chance of having the opportunities that their middle and ruling class counterparts have. In other words, precisely because they have no say in the educational decisions which directly affect them they remain alienated in a foreign environment.

Of course, not all working class students are resisters, many make a tenuous accommodation with the demands of schooling without really understanding the rules of the game (see Hughes and Lauder in this volume). Moreover, there is good evidence that these students simply go along with what the teacher wants them to do as part of a wider class culture which has its roots in the authoritarian nature of work. As Kohn (1977) puts it:

The conditions of occupational life at lower social class levels limit men's view of the job primarily to the extrinsic benefits it provides, foster a narrowly circumscribed conception of self and society, and promote the positive valuation of conformity to authority. (p. 192)

According to Kohn, this general orientation is passed on to working class children with predictable educational outcomes.¹¹ The lesson, from what is now extensive research, is that working class students need empowering in schools by giving them a say in the fundamental educational decisions that affect them. Not only would such empowerment educate all students for democratic citizenship, through the exercise of democratic rights and obligations, it would also provide them with a sense of efficacy — that through education they can act upon the world. And it is precisely through a belief in themselves as *agents* who value the role of education that working class students can achieve the educational opportunities afforded their ruling and middle class counterparts.

But education does not stand alone in society and if these outcomes are to be achieved, changes towards industrial democracy are also needed. Willis' lads resist because their streetwise knowledge tells them that whether they conform to school or not they are likely to get jobs which are tedious and in which they have no stake — if they get jobs at all. Kohn's research suggests conformity to authority is valued by some working class people because they have no say in their work: they have to do as they are told. In both cases work can be made meaningful by giving people a genuine say in the decisions that affect their working lives. There are, of course, further reasons for developing economic and industrial democracy and I shall discuss these in the next section.

If schools are to be democratic in their organization and in their relationship to the community, so they need to be in the curriculum. If knowledge is to be understood as really useful from a working class point of view,¹² it needs to be relevant to working class interests. The simplest way of empowering working class students and ensuring that the curriculum is relevant is through a negotiated, integrated curriculum (Lauder and Khan, 1988).¹³ Such a curriculum does not mean anything goes — far from it. It demands a tightly structured set of procedures which ensure that specific skills and critical understandings are taught — nothing would disadvantage working class students more than if they leave school innumerate, illiterate and ignorant of the uses and abuses of modern technology.

Besides ensuring an equality of essential skills the negotiated curriculum

would do far more for working class students than is presently the case in many schools. For a start the curriculum would be broken down into short courses or modules so that students can see the *point* of what they are doing — that is not the case with our current year-long courses. The barriers between subjects would be broken down so that students can see how knowledge can be synthesized to bear on specific problems. In doing so a number of other problems associated with working class schooling would be tackled. Firstly, the class and gender tagged hierarchy of subjects we now have (see Hughes and Lauder in this volume) would be abolished and would thus remove another impediment to gender and class inequalities. Secondly, the specific conceptual links between areas of knowledge would be taught rather than, as is now the case, left to students to figure out for themselves; something middle class students with cultural capital may be able to do but working class students, who cannot see the point of a subject-divided curriculum, are unlikely to do.

It is important that much of the negotiated curriculum is approached through project work. The reason for this is that many of the understandings and skills necessary for good quality reasoning are not explicitly taught within the traditional curriculum. Encouraging project work would help working class students to utilize resources like libraries, museums and other sources of information and evidence. By using their initiative in this way students would learn not only how to gather relevant information but it would also enable them to see how knowledge fits together to create a theory which has explanatory power and which is useful to them. At the same time they would learn that the reasoning methods taught in school can be applied to the community outside: in short they would learn how to connect schoolwork to their everyday world.

There are two other aspects of a negotiated curriculum that need to be emphasized. The first is that much of the learning would be done cooperatively in a democratic setting. There is good evidence to show that students learn best when working cooperatively, but unless everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute, groups may develop into hierarchies in which those at the bottom fail to learn — hence the need for group democracy. In a wider sense such learning would help to develop the attitudes necessary for democratic citizenship — tolerance, fairness and the ability to see another's point of view.

The second is that in an education for democratic citizenship we need to equip students for critical self-understanding. The aim must be to expose students to theories which enable them to see the world as *socially* constructed rather than given and therefore immutable. The aim, through the negotiated curriculum, is to get students to think critically about their own circumstances and the way their situation can be changed for the better. This means exposing them to theories of class, race and gender inequalities and the effect these dominance structures have on people's lives.

It is, in fact, to do what schools do not on the whole do at all but which

is vital in a democracy; to develop a sociological imagination. C. Wright Mills (1970) could not have expressed it better when he said:

The sociological imagination enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and external career of a variety of individuals. It enables him to [understand that] . . . By the fact of his living he contributes, however minutely, to the shaping of this society and to the course of its history, even as he is made by society and by its historical push and shove. (pp. 11-12)

There are two further features of democratic schooling that need to be discussed. These are captured in the notion of a comprehensive education and they refer to the desirability of teaching and learning taking place in mixed ability groupings and in the idea of delayed selection. There is good evidence to show that streaming breaks up the social solidarity of a school, creating alienation among those in the bottom streams (Hargreaves, 1967). What is worse, the divisions that occur with streaming or banding are typically along class, racial and gender lines. This is because subjects are ordered in an informal hierarchy which is strongly related to class and gender perceptions of what are 'good' subjects to take. If a major concern of democratic education is to break down inequalities, then clearly schools cannot afford the social segregation imposed by streaming or banding.

Equally important is the need for delayed selection. At the present time School Certificate acts as a viciously inegalitarian form of selection with little educational justification (see Hughes and Lauder in this volume). Because working class students enter the educational game at a disadvantage it is important that they are given as long as practically possible to develop their potential.¹⁴ To effectively terminate their educational careers or channel them into 'non-academic' school subjects at the age of 15 and 16 is too early. Indeed, if we develop a democratic curriculum of the kind discussed above, such selection would not occur until after the sixth form. Until then all students would follow a negotiated curriculum. I say *all* students because while such a curriculum may be particularly appropriate for working class students, it would need to be designed for all students, otherwise working class education would become ghettoized as a form of 'special' education. What, in effect, we would be doing is to transform the notion of excellence from one which refers to excellence in particular subjects to a notion of excellence that refers to the personal and intellectual qualities of initiative, tolerance, ability to cooperate, to see problems in an interdisciplinary context, and relatedly, to reason competently and critically about them. These are not qualities that the current education system fosters in all students.

In case there are those who regard democratic schooling as utopian or corrosive of standards or likely to engender economic collapse, it should be said that it is precisely along principles such as those I have articulated that the Swedish education system is run (Ball, 1988). And in terms of both

social justice and economic growth Sweden must be counted as one of the most successful of Western societies.

However, the development of democratic schooling along these lines would not be easy. For a start power would have to be devolved to communities and teachers would not enjoy the patronage of a liberal but bureaucratic state department of education. Similarly, the ideology of professionalism which has insulated teachers from their communities would need to be redefined. But it would be a mistake for teachers to think that the old forms of protection can be continued. We currently have a Labour government committed to stripping away much of the educational bureaucracy and concerned to attack the privilege of professionalism. The question now is whether educational devolution is to conform to the authoritarian market model of the New Right or whether it is to be consistent with community democracy along the lines I have suggested.

But even if teachers were to change their orientation to the community by opening up schools to parental and student decision-making, formidable problems would remain. There are major material and cultural constraints on working class parents in terms of time, communications, transport and confidence in dealing with educational policy because they have, hitherto, been excluded from it. And in areas of unemployment and poverty these problems would be exacerbated. Arguably, however, teachers will only be able to enlist the support of their communities in the struggle against the cost cutting and elitist notions of education currently being peddled by the New Right if they tackle these problems head on.

Section 4

A democratic education of the type I have described would be pointless unless it was supported by a number of welfare measures. The first, and most important of these, is the eradication of poverty and, in particular, one of the major causes of poverty — unemployment. The pathological social effects of both poverty and unemployment are now well documented (Waldegrave and Coventry, 1987). In education recent research has added to the disturbing picture of the consequences of poverty. Essen and Wedge (1982) have shown that once children have suffered severe disadvantage their educational performance continues to suffer *even if there is a subsequent improvement in their circumstances*. Overall, research on poverty and unemployment refutes the New Right idea that the poor and unemployed are the authors of their own downfall and that they remain poor because they don't have the incentive to escape their poverty. In the context of these findings the 17 December, 1987 Douglas tax package must be considered unacceptable because it proposed a two-tier relief system for the low paid and the poor in which those in work would enjoy a far greater margin of support than those receiving benefits. The motivation for these two tiers was to provide an incentive (sic)

to beneficiaries to find work. Such reasoning is not only a departure from traditional Labour Party policy, it flies against the research evidence and worst of all it blames the victims for the misfortunes heaped on them by those in power.

Essen and Wedge's research evidence gives the lie to current Labour government talk about temporary 'pain' because it suggests that the deprivation children experience will endure even if the 'pain' is temporary. However, it is probably the case that for the first time in New Zealand a permanent underclass is being constructed (see Lankshear in this volume) and for a significant proportion of the population there will be nothing temporary about the 'pain' now being inflicted on them. If this is the case, then nothing short of a major reversal of policy by the current government is required in order to eradicate poverty. The consequences of failing to do so should be clear both for this society and for its education system.

However, there are further provisions that need to be put in place, relating to educational opportunities for working class parents. So far I have discussed the impact on education of occupations in which workers are powerless — they merely do as they're told. The other side of inequalities caused by the economic system is the labour market. Working class people are discriminated against and trapped in the semi-skilled and unskilled segment of the market (Edwards *et al.*, 1975; Bowie, 1983). There are, however, three policies the government could introduce to ameliorate the problem. At a specific level it could introduce contract compliance policies in order to promote working class people, Maori and women. It could also initiate provision for worker education along the Italian 150 hours model (Yarnit, 1980). But part of the time given to worker education would need to be set aside for parents' involvement in their children's schooling, and particularly school policy-making.

More generally, a career structure, with in-service training, needs to be made mandatory for all work. It is only by such means that individuals could escape the trap which is currently sprung in the unskilled labour market. Overall, such a policy would provide for greater flexibility and mobility within the labour market and it would remove the barriers which currently discourage retraining and continuing education. It is precisely through the process of self-education that parents are likely to understand the rules of the education game so that they can effectively support their children's education.

Finally, it seems to me that it is important for the government to pursue a policy of reducing wage differentials so that the material basis to the 'mystique' surrounding highly credentialled jobs would be removed. This would allow working class students to 'see' that higher education is something they could achieve, in particular, that university is not a world apart from them.¹⁵ There are, no doubt, other policies that need to be implemented in support of democratic education. What I have tried to do, though, is indicate how education and welfare policies are interdependent. The question that

now needs to be addressed is whether such a policy is at all feasible given the economic and political constraints which now confront us. For what such a policy presupposes is a strong welfare state.

To address this issue we need to look at why this Labour government has embraced New Right thinking in so many areas of policy. This entails seeing how New Right thought relates to the individualistic and privatized assumptions which, I have suggested, have underpinned the welfare state in New Zealand. New Right thought has emerged as a response to the economic crisis that has confronted the West since the oil shock of 1973. The fundamental aim, implicit in the ideology, is to effect a dramatic shift in power in favour of employers over employees and rich over poor in order to make capitalism more efficient in the current climate of increased competitiveness. To do this the New Right advocates four broad strategies: cuts in state expenditure to liberate funds for productive investment in the private sector; the privatization of as much of the state as possible and the introduction of proxy market arrangements in state sectors where privatization is not possible, on the assumption that privatization and market mechanisms lead to greater efficiency; a redistribution of income in favour of the rich in the hope that they will invest part of their increased income in productive private enterprises; the rationalization and control of the workforce in order to make it more compliant and efficient.

It will be apparent that a major thrust of the New Right assault on New Zealand society is directed toward the welfare state. According to New Right theory, the state is a source of inefficiency because it is not subject to the discipline of the market and because, to use Korpi's (1985) description, it is a leaky bucket rather than an irrigation system since it wastes funds that could be better used to create wealth by the private sector. In addition the state reduces individual freedom and creates inequalities because it generates dependency.

If we stand back for a moment and consider the various points of this attack on the state, we can grasp why it is so intuitively seductive. Overall it is able to conjure an unlikely combination of policy proposals and aims: reduce state expenditure and by doing so freedom and equality of opportunity are created. Let us have a closer look at some of these New Right arguments.

One major strategy for attacking the welfare state is to claim that it is a bastion of middle class privilege, in that the middle class staff the state and run it in their own interests. According to the New Right, one clear example of how the state serves middle class interests is through universal welfare benefits which, it argues, redistributes money from the working to the middle class. In education they have attacked the fact that university bursaries are not means tested as a case of this form of redistribution. Instead of universal benefits the New Right, and particularly the current Minister of Finance, argues that welfare benefits should be targeted. Indeed, the basic tenor of Labour government policy, to date, has been to target welfare assistance to those who genuinely need it and allow the market to prevail

for everyone else. Such a strategy is crude in that it sees poverty as a purely individual problem that can be alleviated by careful targeting, and it reflects the individualistic and privatized thinking which has underpinned the provision of welfare in New Zealand. As such the retreat from universalism and the slimming down of the state have really not proved a problem for the current government. But such thinking is also naive for two reasons: universalism is one of the major foundations of an adequate welfare state; discard it as a basic principle and the welfare state will be vulnerable to near complete dismantling, with all that would entail for poverty and inequality. Moreover, the rejection of universalism would lead to a rapid deterioration in the ability of New Zealanders to participate democratically in their society.

To see why these consequences would be likely to follow we need to examine the pillars on which an adequate welfare state is maintained. Historically, strong welfare states have been created by an alliance between strong trade union movements, their political representatives in Parliament and the middle class (Stephens, 1979; Esping-Andersen, 1985a and 1985b). In other words, adequate welfare state provision does not arise solely or in large part out of a sense of altruism but through a power bloc generated through an alliance between the middle and working classes. Universal benefits constitute the hawsers by which this alliance is bound together. To move from universal benefits to targeting would be to ensure middle class exit to the private sector with three consequences. The solidarity between the middle and the working class would be broken, thereby increasing the intolerance for state beneficiaries. In turn state welfare provision is likely to diminish in quality. In sum society would rapidly be divided into a first and second class citizenry. Not only would that entail unequal health, education and welfare facilities but it would diminish the social solidarity needed for democratic citizenship.

But, of course, the attack on the welfare state is also being conducted through an attack on the trade union movement. Terms like labour market flexibility, contestability and plant bargaining all denote attacks on trade union solidarity, the most recent example of which can be found in the State Sector Act. Consequently, if the New Right's attack on universalism and the trade union movement is successful, whatever provision is made through targeting will be vulnerable to further cuts at the whim of any future government without a countervailing force to protect the poor and the unemployed. Without that protection the working class further exposes itself to exploitation.

The New Right attack should not be underestimated; in its ideology and political strategy it is very sophisticated. In part it has gained ground so rapidly here amongst members of the Labour government because welfare provision has not been seen as essential to the political and social ends of democratic participation, social solidarity and social justice but rather as a means to furthering individual and private goals in a capricious economic environment.

In part, however, the New Right attack on the welfare state has gained ground because of the economic constraints which have been imposed by the prolonged economic crisis. Increasing international competitiveness, the changing pattern of international trade and demand for primary produce, the deindustrialization and import penetration which have occurred under Rogernomics have impacted hard on New Zealand's economic well-being. At the same time as economic growth has slowed, the tax burden to pay for welfare state provision has increasingly fallen on middle and skilled working class taxpayers. As such there has been a material basis to the New Right assault on the welfare state expressed in bumper sticker slogans like 'less government through less taxes'.

Under these conditions it is not surprising that the present Labour government finds itself in such a contradictory position. To attack universal benefits and the trade union movement is to attack its own supporters. But according to the New Right economic theories it follows, to fail to do so is to court economic disaster and to place whatever control the government has over economic policy in the hands of its creditors.

A clear example of this contradiction arises out of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Social Policy. The point is well made by Ian Templeton, from a right-wing perspective, in a critique of the Royal Commission's working papers on income maintenance and taxation when he says:

Already deeply divided by the Rogernomic bid to provide a platform for social policy change, the government is now challenged by a report which, instead of proceeding from the basic assumption that New Zealand is on the bones of its backside appears to be convinced that the country commands some vast cornucopia from which an endless stream of social benefits can flow ... The challenge was to devise ... a more effective organization of the welfare state ... Instead the Royal Commission has proposed the same old mix ... It goes for the universal rather than the particular. It argues for increasing many benefits and then indexing them.¹⁶

He goes on to note that despite the argument for more benefits:

The Royal Commission itself points to the rising cost of welfarism when it points to the 17-fold increase in the number on the unemployment benefit over the last decade and the doubling in the number of domestic purposes beneficiaries.

Templeton appears to have a point. It does seem contradictory at a time of low or negative economic growth to advocate increasing welfare benefits. But to fail to do so is to create an atomized, anti-democratic, anti-egalitarian society. It is precisely the economic inefficiencies that these consequences would create that Templeton overlooks. The New Right has so captured the ideological high ground that many have bought the assumption that

equality and economic efficiency are incompatible. Yet there is no good evidence to suggest this assumption holds (Korpi, 1985) and indeed we could expect the wastage of human resources to be considerable in the case of a retreat from the welfare state. This is particularly so in education where the current class, racially discriminatory and patriarchal structures determine that there is a massive wastage of intellectual ability (Hughes and Lauder, 1989).

In the short term a compromise centred on the policies proposed by the Royal Commission may be possible. After all, in contrast to Britain (Green, 1987) there does seem to be a majority in favour of the maintenance of universal welfare state provision in New Zealand.¹⁷ However, in the event of a protracted economic depression it is unlikely that the present incompatible mix of New Right economic policies and a universal welfare state can be maintained.

One solution to this dilemma is to suggest that economic efficiency, democratic participation and social justice are compatible and that we should move toward the robust notion of citizenship I have argued for. This would entail the development of economic and industrial democracy with at least four possible beneficial outcomes.

Economically it would solve a number of problems: the burden of wage restraint at a time of depression would be shared throughout the economy thereby making it easier to achieve. It would also ensure that investment would be directed toward productive industries in order to create jobs rather than being squandered on unproductive investment like property speculation.

Socially many of the functions of the welfare state would be relocated at the economic level. Full employment, a guaranteed minimum wage and social solidarity would be achieved through economic and industrial democracy, thereby substantially reducing welfare expenditure.

Educationally the process and outcomes of democratic schooling are much more likely to be realized within a democratic economy for reasons which should already be clear. Educational inequalities are largely caused by the lack of industrial democracy. Create industrial democracy and educational standards would rise because it is precisely the qualities required for decision-making within an industrial democracy which are needed by parents to participate in the shaping of their children's education.

Finally, there is a political pay-off because policies aimed at economic and industrial democracy would enfranchise a significant proportion of New Zealanders who are currently disenfranchized by the monopoly of right-wing parties. The continued failure of political parties to speak to the interests of this group is likely to lead to increased alienation, anomie and crime.

The chances of any government, including a Labour government, embracing economic and industrial democracy are remote precisely because, if the general arguments I have developed are correct, it would require a major historical shift from the assumptions that have determined thinking about the relationship between individuals, society and the welfare state in

New Zealand. However, if the economic depression persists, failure to develop the kind of democratic society which is now possible in Scandinavia¹⁸ will mean that education will be conducted in an increasingly inequalitarian environment, hostile to democracy.

Notes

- 1 Lange, D. (1986) The Mackintosh Memorial Lecture, Edinburgh, June.
- 2 Oliver (1977), p. 25.
- 3 This privatized view of citizenship may have much to do with the development of patriarchy in New Zealand (see Phillips, 1987, chapter 5; in particular his remarks on Savage as the stereotype of the family man).
- 4 Quoted in Gustafson (1986), p. 165.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 212.
- 6 Ashford (1986), p. 309.
- 7 The point here is that targeting signals the thin end of the wedge as regards an adequate welfare state. Minimal provision of this kind is really an attempt to keep everyone within the margins of society — just. Such minimal support may prevent major social discontent but it does not provide the conditions for democratic participation because working class people will be powerless collectively and individually. They would have to rely on charity. See my argument in section 4 of this chapter.
- 8 The major theoretician of the role of middle and ruling class culture in the perpetuation of educational privilege is Bourdieu. See, in particular, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977). For research in New Zealand heavily influenced by Bourdieu see Codd, Harker and Nash (1985).
- 9 One of the major problems with market orientations to schooling is that they involve de zoning, and this makes it more difficult for parents to be actively involved in their children's schooling.
- 10 Willis' lads are described in Willis' (1977) classic. They represent the clash between one kind of working class culture and the middle class culture of the school.
- 11 For a discussion of Kohn's findings in relation to research in New Zealand see Lauder and Khan (1988).
- 12 See Grace in this volume for a discussion of really useful knowledge.
- 13 See Khan in this volume for a report on a curriculum project which is attempting to follow the precepts of a democratic education in Christchurch.
- 14 McPherson and Willms (1987) have shown that significant gains were made in terms of equalizing working class students' life chances by the change to comprehensivization in Scotland. In part this was due to the more balanced social intakes into schools resulting from the abandonment of selection at 11+. The same principle applies at the tertiary level. See Power and Robertson (1987).
- 15 Evidence from the Christchurch School Leavers Study, phase 2 suggests that working class students often do not see university as part of their world. See the author for further information on this.
- 16 Ian Templeton, *Christchurch Star*, 19 March 1988.
- 17 I base this on what the Royal Commission has said about New Zealanders' attitudes to the welfare state and the results of the recent Heylen poll on education.

- 18 Discussion about economic democracy in Sweden centres on the Meidner plan. See Esping-Andersen (1985b). The discussion in section 4 of this chapter is based on his arguments in both his 1985a and 1985b books.

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Power to the People? The Great Education Reform Act and Tomorrow's Schools: A Critical and Comparative Perspective

John Evans and Brian Davies

On Sunday 21 May 1989 *The Observer*, one of Britain's leading respectable Sunday newspapers, reported the view of Alan Smith, the Director of the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management, who claimed that headteachers of schools opting out under the new Education Reform Act (ERA) provisions would be faced with uncomfortable budgetary options of either expending limited funds on academic resources such as text books or on buying time at leisure centres. Smith anticipated that the 'pressure for results' would mean 'that leisure centre activities will be the first to go'. Moreover, 'single schools will be unable to negotiate the advantageous block rates at (leisure) centres currently achieved by local authorities. Poor individual schools haven't got a hope.' *The Observer* comments, 'a healthy mind in a healthy body seems to be one Victorian value that is increasingly under threat' (p. 19). Earlier in the year *The Times Educational Supplement* had reported that 'schools in Britain's most deprived inner city areas were facing swingeing cuts in their budgets under future funding proposals drawn up by their local education authority.' ERA's all-funding formulae are tightly controlled to ensure that 'all schools are treated the same' and that 'the number and ages of pupils' must be the most important factors in deciding the level of funds (*The Times Educational Supplement*, 1989, p. 1). A formula which took no consideration of the social context of the school or the backgrounds of the pupils, would, it was claimed, lead to a 'redistribution of resources to schools in more prosperous suburbs.' The effect would be to redistribute 'thousands of pounds from schools in deprived areas to more favoured schools in the suburbs and rural parts of the country.'

These disturbing reports refer to ERA's proposals for local management of schools and 'opting out' (more about which will be said later). The troubled voices which they express rumble like a distant thunder announcing a storm

that is inevitably to come. Given the clearly iniquitous and potentially socially divisive and educationally damaging consequences of these measures, one is entitled to ask how and why were such measures intended? How did such proposals and the government which sponsored them achieve sufficient support for their implementation in schools? We will try and address some of these questions in this chapter.¹

The principal ideological thrust of the 1988 Education Reform Act is that market forces can be applied as well to the education system as to any other site of production. It is assumed, as Wragg (1988) nicely puts it, 'that what works for sellers of pots and pans must also be appropriate for and therefore imposed on those charged with one of society's most important assignments, educating the next generation' (p. 5); that competition between schools, teachers and pupils will win now and weed out the weak and the inefficiently ugly and that the activation of greater parental consumer choice and control over schools will flourish to ensure that this differentiation happens. ERA is intended to constitute a 'blue print' for the production of consumer identities (Elliot, 1988, p. 4 referring to the Bill which subsequently became the Act, in a remarkably unchanged form). But the sovereignty of the consumer is not to be confused with that of the citizen. The view we have taken (see Evans and Davies, 1988) is that the Bill proposed far reaching and potentially damaging changes both to the educational system and to democracy itself because it confused mere consumer choice with the proper entitlement of a citizenry. By the undue privileging of the former in an area where, on good grounds it has long been held to have little business, it effectively sustains the interests of a *status quo* under the cloak of populism. It guarantees more hierarchy and difference in provision levels, while claiming that the process will provide net increases in 'standards'. It will in fact, net, limit choice, ride roughshod over the principles and practice of discussion and debate within a well-laid framework of consensus politics, and put power firmly and massively in the hands not of the people, as it proclaims, but of the government and state.

Of course, there is nothing new about governments in the UK, or New Zealand for that matter, using education to sponsor or encourage the development of a particular social and political order, or a certain attitude of mind amongst its citizens. As theorists of the left, right and centre have consistently reminded us, the shaping of individuals through the family and the education system is the shaping of a generation (Ranson, 1988). The state and the church have long known this and have consequently intervened in the process. In the UK, as Ranson (1988) points out, *both* the 1944 and the 1988 Acts are about shaping educational purposes by government in order to secure the constitution of a particular, ruling social and political order. But whereas the former enshrined a distribution of power and responsibilities amongst relevantly interested and empowered agents (local education authorities, teachers, parents) to form a 'partnership' (never so equal, in our view, as Ranson makes out), the latter seeks to impose a 'consumer democracy'

that will replace 'the purported weary assumptions of the liberal democratic state which have lasted a generation or more' (*ibid.*, p. 2).

The ideological and the substantive content of the Bill, and the responses to it which were hurriedly produced and the subsequent Act which studiously ignored them, have been subjected to a massive amount of scrutiny in recent months (see Davies, 1988; Haviland, 1988; Simon, 1988; Maclure, 1988; Evans and Davies, 1988) and we have no great wish to recover this well trodden ground. We want to focus here less on the content of the Act than upon some aspects of the background to its production, particularly on the jockeying for rhetorical dominance by government 'experts' and the media which has helped create the conditions for it (see also Evans and Davies, 1988). What we argue is that ERA is merely the culmination of what has been a long and often bitter battle for control over the labour process of teaching, centrally over who is to define what is to count as valid educational knowledge, and how it is to be taught and assessed, with direct consequences for teachers as workers. In our view, this has been largely fought and lost by teachers, though we will go on to say that the Act may well contain the seeds of its own negation/destruction. Where possible we will also try and draw comparisons between ERA and *Tomorrow's Schools* (TS), the major educational policy proposals about to be implemented in schools in New Zealand. It is, as others have pointed out (Walsh, 1988), 'intriguing and somewhat unusual for two countries so similar in social, economic and political structures to embark simultaneously on such similar radical education policy innovations.' It is not, however, in our view really surprising that they should do so given 'the crisis in capitalism' which both countries have experienced. As we will try and point out there are striking similarities between ERA and TS which rest on economic and social problems which governments in both countries have had to face in the 1970s and 1980s. These problems have engendered in the political mind the 'need' to achieve better control over the educational workforce putatively in the interests of cost efficiency, better management and higher education standards.

In attempting this analysis we have drawn heavily upon older *genres* of organizational analysis that transact between organizational work, culture and power. In particular the work of Gouldner (1955a and 1959b), Selznick (1966) and Crozier (1969), along with the insights of more recent analysts of organizational cultures (Bates, 1986), has proved helpful. Together these theorists help illuminate not only the way in which in times of social and economic change a managerial ideology helps sponsor organizational change, but also the underlying instability and fragility of that ideology as a solution to deep seated problems in the school and social system and conflicts between managers and workers.

In June 1987 a Conservative government in Britain was returned for a third term of office with a massive majority. Forty-two per cent of the vote had secured 60 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons. Hardly had the political waters begun to settle when consultation documents and

discussion papers began to be issued, at pace, from the DES onto the educational public, arriving just at the onset of the holiday period. Respondents had until the end of November (some eight-ten weeks), when the Bill was to be introduced to Parliament, to appraise the document and give it their consideration. Unsurprisingly there was an outcry over both the timescale and process. Many pointed out (see Haviland, 1988) that it was neither reasonable, realistic or business-like to believe that this was adequate time for the kind of debate and discussion warranted by what in effect was a massive piece of legislation and proposed educational reform. It is to the credit of the various interest groups and some measure of the inadequacies of the Bill that even in the short time available, the documents provoked a level of response which was (as Haviland points out) before unseen in any other consultative exercise conducted by a Secretary of State for Education and Science. Some 18,000 replies were lodged with the Education Secretary, mainly dissenting, but the Bill was introduced and enacted in the House in a massively unaltered form. A similar process was evident in New Zealand. The report of the government-sponsored Picot task force was released for public consumption on 10 May 1988. Despite substantial opposition (and a level of response, in the form of letters to the government, even greater than that achieved by the British Bill) by August most of its proposals had become embodied, largely unaltered in the policy document *Tomorrow's Schools*, ready for implementation in October 1989.

Now in passing we might ask why all the hurry to get these measures enacted? In our view, in NZ as in the UK, only the naive think that public debate could or would have effected changes in what in truth are overtly ideological and political measures. As Simon (1988) points out on the British scene, the Bill needed to be enacted quickly because it was seen as a springboard for the return of a Conservative government at the next election. It is no great stretch of the imagination to consider that this motive also inspired the NZ Labour government whose future is much more precarious than that of Mrs Thatcher's. The political objectives to the British Bill, however, were to break the power of the local education authorities as part of a wider assault on the whole institutional fabric of municipal state socialism and, we will argue, to wrest from teachers their autonomy with respect to control of the curriculum and forms of assessment. In both countries the cost of running the education system was also high amongst the concerns of the political parties in government. As we see, a rhetoric of 'efficiency' and 'accountability' has featured prominently and consistently in the political discourse of education debates in the UK and NZ. Recently, when visiting NZ, Kenneth Baker (the then Education Secretary), happily pointed to the similarities between his Conservative policies and those of a socialist government in New Zealand. He commented, 'the cost of education is forcing Governments of all political persuasions to investigate whether they were getting good value for money' (*The Times Educational Supplement*, 1989, p. 9). Ideological purity counts for little when the fiscal waters are required to

run shallow or dangerously low. One can, of course, also ask questions about the nature of the 'investigations' which foreran the implementation of ERA and *Tomorrow's Schools* and how and why such a process occurred.

Two further questions arise. How could the Conservative and Labour governments in the UK and NZ so easily implement such unpopular measures? How could they manifestly bypass and ignore the multitude of dissenting voices emanating from within the profession? Undoubtedly in Britain, a huge majority in Parliament and, in both countries, Opposition parties as sterile in imagination as they are weak in the lobby helped matters greatly. But Parliamentary power is no guarantee of broader popular consent and support on particular issues. It is the achievement of that with respect to ERA and *Tomorrow's Schools* which is of interest here.

According to Crozier (1964 and 1969) players in social and organizational power games are far from equal, but their strategies share a fundamental objective,

to gain whatever advantage is possible, within the constraining rules of the game, by restricting the choices of alternatives open to others whilst preserving or enhancing their own choices. (quoted in Pugh *et al.*, 1984, p. 126)

In the long run 'power is closely related to those uncertainties on which the life of an organization depends, and the strategies of the groups in the power games are aimed at controlling the ultimate strategic source of uncertainties. Uncertainty explains power' (*ibid.*, p. 127). He goes on, '... There is a peculiar rhythm of change in bureaucratic organizations, ... long periods of stability give rise to short periods of crisis and change. Conflicts are stifled until they explode.' Moreover, '... Authoritarian reformer figures wait amidst the bureaucratic routine for that moment of crisis when the system will need them ...' (*ibid.*, p. 129). Indeed we know that at the social, as well as organizational level, authoritarian reformers are no longer content to sit on the sidelines awaiting a crisis but actively generate a process of social and organizational upheaval by consciously creating a crisis in which they can then intervene to manipulate and implement their own preferred solutions. What ERA and TS witness is a state offensive for control over important 'areas of uncertainty', the curriculum, and pedagogy of schooling, directed at teachers whose status and power have depended upon control of these aspects in the educational process.

In NZ and the UK the educational systems have long sustained a position of relative autonomy in relation to the state, the administrative particulars of which were embodied in Britain in the 1944 Act, and in NZ in the 1877 Education Act. In Britain, the state education system has effectively been managed by local education authorities which provided the organizational frameworks and the levels of resource with which and in which teachers have been left to manipulate the curriculum and pedagogy of schooling. In NZ too, although a system of central funding has operated through a single

government central Department of Education, decisions about what should be taught in the primary and secondary sectors and upon which priorities money should be spent, have been largely devolved to more local agencies (education boards, school committees, or the principals of schools). Tendencies towards centralization have long been resisted in both educational scenes. As Boag (1989) has pointed out, the 1962 Commission of Inquiry into education in NZ reached the conclusion that although

a fully centralized system would be swifter in decisions and cheaper to operate in a country of small size, such as NZ, than any decentralized system . . . it would not, however, necessarily provide a better education for New Zealand pupils or be acceptable to the New Zealand community.

He continues, in NZ, the 'process of educational administration and decision-making is in many ways one of discussion, negotiation, of consultation and persuasion'; ' . . . official policy is one of decentralization and the development of local autonomy and local decision making to the greatest possible extent'. The similarities with the British system are unsurprising given the historical connections between the two countries. In both there has been, to use Ranson's (1988) terms, 'a complex, polycentered division of power and responsibility appropriate to different tasks. Divided power was designed to ensure partnership between necessary and equal parties to the government of education' (p. 317). Within this framework teachers in Britain could, within the limits set by the examination system, and in NZ within a centrally determined set of curriculum guidelines, exercise a great deal of control over the content, organization and pedagogies of schooling. The curriculum was theirs as experts and professionals, a carefully protected 'area of uncertainty' serving as the context in which their power resided. Teachers in Britain and NZ could exploit this autonomy productively to achieve status as 'experts' and gain recognition and status for their profession, though without particular parallel success in developing or encouraging a 'partnership' between themselves and the 'consumers' of their work. In Britain, teachers have all too rarely shown much skill, sensitivity or relish for the business of bridging the divide between schools and the communities which they serve. Though the measures now being promoted through ERA and TS will do little to alter this situation or give parents anything more than a minimal say in curriculum matters and other school decision-making processing (see Lauder, 1988), it would be difficult not to acknowledge the frustrations felt by many of them, for example, when trying to gain access to information about their children. This has formed an important 'material base' upon which the rhetoric of accountability and consumer choice could be mounted and developed.

In both the UK and NZ, teachers have long operated within organizational contexts and administrative structures which characteristically feature an '*indulgency pattern*' (Gouldner, 1955), a form of organizational life

which relies on a 'flexible interpretation of rules at the discretion of individual managers and on an implied consensus between these and workers' (see Reed, 1988, p. 155). In such contexts progressive, curriculum initiative could flourish and develop and the curriculum reform movement of the 1960s could challenge the merits of subject centred teaching, develop forms of curriculum and teaching which emphasized learning processes and a content sensitive to the cultural differences of children (see Elliot, 1988, pp. 20 and 21). It was in these 'areas of uncertainty' that in Britain LEAs like the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) could begin to develop curricula which addressed issues of racism, sexism, and equal opportunities, in which courses on peace studies, sex education and health education could flourish, all implicitly or explicitly recognizing the cultural plurality of British society. The power of their unions in both countries, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, also made teachers not easily amenable to direct and detailed formal state control. Their rights to 'control the system' appeared legitimated by the 1877 (in NZ) and 1944 (in the UK) Acts and were deeply embedded in the professional and public psyche.

However, these relatively decentralized systems of educational government and practice were coming under increasing pressure from the accelerated evolution of industrial societies during the 1960s and 1970s. As many others have pointed out (Ranson, 1988; CCCS, 1981; Lauder, 1988) the liberal democratic states in both NZ and the UK were badly shaken by the oil crisis and a fiscal crisis in public expenditure and by a massive increase in the level of unemployment particularly amongst their youth. By the early 1970s in both countries full employment had become a thing of the past. In NZ, in March 1974 there was just 701 people registered as unemployed and seventy-six special work programmes. By December 1979 these figures had risen to 26,889 registered unemployed and 27,794 on special or subsidized work programmes (Department of Labour, 1980, quoted in Nash, 1983, p. 123). In Britain, changes in employment patterns have been just as dramatic. The point to be stressed, however, is that in both NZ and the UK, the established pattern of government and bureaucracy (like the French sort of the 1950s to which Crozier refers) could not easily cope with the social and economic problems which the accelerating process of socioeconomic change was producing. Certainly in education, governments in the UK and in NZ found themselves at the apex of decentralized systems which maximized the ability of primary producers (teachers, LEAs) to produce and resist innovation and minimized the capacity of managerial practitioners (ministers of education, the DES) to restructure existing arrangements *except through crisis management* (see Reed, 1988, p. 162). So it is perhaps hardly surprising, against a background of social change and economic crisis, that governments in both the UK and NZ should begin to consider that they could neither afford, nor continue to permit, the luxury of a decentralized system which placed so much control in the hands of the professionals and localities and so little in the hands of the state.

So let the Crisis Begin

In Britain, Conservative policy has systematically portrayed teachers and syndicalism as obstacles to 'freedoms' which could be better guaranteed by the market. Here from the Black Papers of the 1960s on, attacks on policies of comprehensive schooling, mixed ability grouping and curriculum innovations pictured them as rampant and insidious socialism damaging British schools. The charge against the profession was falling educational standards, pupil underachievement and the acceptance, even the promotion, by teachers of ill discipline and poor pupil control. This theme of school failure was not confined to Conservative policy. It was given most serious impetus by James Callaghan, the Labour Prime Minister in his Ruskin College, Oxford, speech in which he chided the education system for its irrelevance to working life. Callaghan emphasized the need to prepare future generations for life, arguing that 'new recruits from the schools sometimes do not have the basic tools to do the job that is required, that there is an anti-industrial spirit especially amongst the most able; that students were ill equipped technologically in a society dominated by new technologies and, lastly that they were not developing those qualities that equip them for making a living' (Pring, 1987). There is little doubt that these earlier attacks on the teaching profession, developed and aired more noisily by the Conservative voices of the 'academic' pamphleteers, the old humanists and the industrial lobby (see Davies, 1987; Ball, 1987), paved the way for the most radical right-wing government since the war ruthlessly and expertly to exploit what it claimed were the failings of the comprehensive system to provide amongst other things a curriculum for a modern technological society and for working class children (see Evans and Davies, 1988). Teachers were persistently charged with promoting falling standards in education performance and positively contributing to Britain's decline. In the eyes of the right, the whole purpose of schooling has been distorted by teachers' preoccupation with equality, the presence of too much egalitarianism in the system and by local politicians and professionals appropriating control of the service from its proper source, the parents. Teachers had too much control and they were insufficiently accountable to the consumer.

Even a cursory glance at the discourse surrounding the arrival of TS reveals similar themes and criticisms. As Walsh (1988) points out, in NZ as in the UK, accountability has been *the* central concept in the process of state restructuring and changes in educational government (p. 2). Although the criticisms of teachers have been somewhat more 'polite' and less vitriolic than on the British scene (see, Evans and Davies, 1988), they have nonetheless identified teachers and the process of schooling as the locations of blame for society's economic and social problems. As Lauder *et al.* (1988) point out, the Treasury, which has largely set the agenda for the present labour government in NZ, in its powerful statement on the educational system claimed to have identified 'a general decline in standards; the widening gap

between the performance of upper and middle class students and their working class counterparts; relatedly an increase in alienation from education among working class students; the lack of an adequate orientation to the economy in the curriculum and a lack of accountability by the providers of education to the consumer' (p. 25). However, there are important differences in the way in which this critique of schools and teachers has been framed in NZ. Whereas in the UK the Conservative right has centred on the presence of too great a concern for equality in the system, arguing like politicians elsewhere, that egalitarianism is on a collision course with freedom, (see, McWilliam, 1987, p. 63) in NZ by contrast, the 'socialist' critique of education has been constructed on the claim that there is too little rather than too much equity in the educational system and consequently in society at large, and that this condition has persisted despite the support of generous government spending. Lauder *et al.* (1988) summarize this position nicely when they write, in their critique of the Treasury Report which foreran TS,

The lynchpin of its attack on New Zealand education centres on the related claim that increased educational expenditure does not lead to improvements in learning, improved educational attainments do not necessarily lead to economic growth and increased educational expenditure does not lead to greater equality of opportunity ... (p. 7)

In ERA, *Tomorrow's Schools* and the Treasury Report which preceded it we find that notions of state intervention to manage the education system in the interests of justice and equality are now supplanted by a language of consumer choice, cost efficiency and the equal opportunities available to each and every individual to pursue their own (freely chosen) interests and ends, arrived at from quite different starting points on the party political spectrum. The Treasury Report states ...

In sum, Government intervention (in education) is liable to reduce freedom of choice and thereby curtail the sphere of responsibility of its citizens and weaken the self-steering mechanism ability inherent in society to reach optimal solutions through the mass of individual actions pursuing free choice without formal consensus ... (p. 41, quoted in Lauder *et al.*, 1988)

Voices of the political right and left in the UK and NZ thus converge to proclaim the sovereignty of both the individual and the market place as the means of ameliorating society's social and economic ills.

Never Mind the Quality, Feel the Form

There are similarities, too, in the way in which criticisms of teachers have been constructed and presented for popular consumption. As Walsh (1988) has pointed out on the NZ scene, claims verging on accusation about the

poor quality of teaching have tended to proceed 'largely in isolation from empirical analysis of specific policy contexts and situations'. Consequently, in this discourse we find a form of analysis which neatly slips from undocumented assertion of a crisis to the immediate diagnosis of the causes (teacher or administrative inefficiency) of the problem, and on to the means of their solution (more consumer choice; better, meaning more local, management). The language of this discourse is unambiguous, unequivocal, it speaks with an authority which belies the dubiety of social science and educational research. These tendencies are as evident in the discourse which defines the problem as they are in the solutions then found to them. For example, in a discussion document we are told by Baker, without reference to any evidence to support the claim, that 'The imaginative application of professional skills at all levels of the educational scene within a statutory framework *will* raise standards' (para 10, p. 5); and then, despite all the evidence to the contrary, that targets set around 7, 11, 14, 16 are 'a proven way of raising standards of achievement' (see Davies, 1988).

Tomorrow's Schools claims, 'our children will not receive the education to which they are entitled unless our administration is effective' and

The government *is certain* that the reform it proposes will result in more immediate delivery of the resources to schools, more parental and community involvement, and greater teacher responsibility. It will lead to improved learning opportunities for the children of this country. The reformed administration will be sufficiently flexible and responsive to meet the particular needs of Maori education . . . (TS, 1988, our emphasis)

There is something profoundly disturbing about a form of political culture which gives such licence to a discourse in which 'facts' rarely are allowed to trammel the interests of a political judgment or opinion (Davies, 1988). Yet this is what the critique of education so frequently has been based upon. This tendency, as evident in NZ as it is in Britain, perhaps stems from a deeper conviction that only those engaged in changing the world can see it correctly. Or perhaps it is the case that neither humility nor dubiety are or can be the prerogative/privilege of those whose political careers are dependent upon the reason or fancy of the electorate at large. But the price which ultimately has to be paid for this authority is democracy itself, especially if the means of its contestation are increasingly limited by the authoritarian and interventionist measures of the government and the state.

The point being stressed here, though, is that this discourse has played an important part in shaping consciousness at the level of common sense, in setting up the idea in the public mind that egalitarianism in the UK and inefficiency in the NZ school systems are 'on a crash course with personal freedom and liberty', a course which only decentralization can redirect from calamity (McWilliam, 1987, p. 63). It is a discourse that has played an important part in myth making about the nature of education, its problems

and the solutions available. Myths, as Bates (1986) points out, are not concerned with facts but with meaning, that is the interpretive and prescriptive rules which provide the basis for understanding and action (p. 83). Their key aspects are metaphors, rituals and negotiation (*ibid.*, p. 84). In the UK, as in NZ, the metaphors of management and the market place have readily been applied to education. These metaphors not only 'profoundly and often unconsciously determine our attitudes towards the world, people, events and actions . . .'; they also 'obscure the interests of dominating elites and present particular partisan views of the world as uncontested description of the way things are', and ought to be (Bates, 1986, p. 85).

Managing the Crisis

Having created in the public mind the ideas that a crisis abounds in the educational world, that there is inefficiency and wastage in the system due to too much centralization and that (especially in the UK) teachers 'know nothing, are self interested, radical experts, preventing sovereign parent consumers getting at the education goods' (Davies, 1988), ERA and TS enter as radical *educational* solutions which privilege the market as the natural saviour of our economies and moral welfare. The cry is give power to the parents, make schools more responsive to the market. Only decentralization will raise standards and change the form and content of education in accordance with that of market demands. In short, creating a direct accountability between consumer (parent) and producers (teachers) is the secret to the renewal of education, the economy and society at large (see Ranson, 1988).

Both ERA and TS aim to solve an economic crisis. In Britain the main means are present in terms of a National Curriculum 5-16 with an accompanying system of assessment. Everyone, regardless of social category, except those 'statemented' or lacking in English as a mother tongue, is to get the same key contents, skills and processes from core subjects (maths, English, science and technology) and foundation studies (modern language, history/geography, art/music/drama, RE and PE). *Ad hoc* working parties have and will recommend programmes of work and attainment targets to the Secretary of State in some detail for the core subjects and the seven foundation subjects. The foundations will leave 10 per cent of time to additional subjects in secondary schools. The curriculum thus will constitute a set of discrete and desirable contents and a structure 'given' to teachers (and parents) within which 'the imaginative application of professional skills at all levels of the education scene within the statutory framework which sets clear objectives *will raise standards*' (DES/Welsh Office, 1987, para 10, p. 5). There will be plenty of testing and assessment. Attainment targets will be set around 7, 11, 14 and 16. To 'guarantee' the raising of standards everyone will get more and better information; teachers on how their classes stand in relation to others; parents on what is taught and individual class

attainments. Armed with this information parents can pick their schools in a system of 'open enrolment'. County and voluntary schools are to be required to admit pupils to the limits of what is said to be their 'available capacity', defined as 1979 entry numbers, a size appropriate to an earlier demographic boom which will provide the margin necessary to ameliorate oversubscription to popular schools. In the current demographic conditions, it also guarantees the demise of 'unpopular' (hence 'unsuccessful') schools. Thus 'good schools' will flourish and any except the small primary schools will be allowed upon a simple majority vote of parents to opt out of LEA control and funding into 'grant maintained' status, directly formula funded by the DES. The headteachers and governors of all secondary schools (and primaries with 200 pupils or more) will receive and manage their own budgets even where they remain within LEA control. A formula based on the number of pupils on the school roll will dictate the size of the budget. The social background and needs of pupils will not enter into the budgetary consideration. This local management of schools signals a significant shift of power from LEAs to manage their systems, schools to seek their individual fates.

In some respects ERA brings the British system closer to that in NZ which has had a set of National Curriculum guidelines within which teachers have worked. But it goes way beyond that system to establish a set of curricular contents and an assessment structure which are likely to place severe restrictions not only on the autonomy of teachers but also on that of parents too. Parents effectively will have little capacity to influence the content and priorities of what is to be taught other than through the withdrawal of their children from particular schools. By contrast TS has much less than ERA to say about curriculum matters and it says nothing at all about assessment. It does, however, provide parents some opportunities to influence the curriculum. Set against ERA's proposals, these opportunities seem quite radical and very generous. *Tomorrow's Schools* states that

there will be a set of national curriculum objectives established within the national guidelines for education. Optional elements possible within the national objectives will be determined by the community and the institutions working together and will be expressed in the institution's charter. Parents and the community will also have a part to play in the establishment of the national curriculum objectives, through education forum. (p. 35)

Like ERA, TS sustains the right of parents to send their children to a school of their choice as long as it is not physically full. However, in contrast to the untethered consumerism and 'freedom of choice' contained in ERA, TS retains a commitment to a neighbourhood schools principle. An 'enrolment scheme' will ensure that students can attend a state school 'reasonably convenient to their home, to give parents maximum choice, and to make the best use of existing school plant' (p. 36); and there will be 'provision to review the home zone area, and the maximum roll and threshold roll

numbers, and to vary them if necessary' (p. 36). Just as in ERA there is provision too for parents to 'withdraw from existing arrangements' (p. 37).

At this stage we can only speculate on the outcomes of such 'freedoms'. But like others we would suggest that they may signal an increase in the number of segregated schools as parents weigh issues such as racial mix, religion and culture in their choices. This is the price which will have to be paid for the newly reconstructed system of schooling, in which variety and competition are to flourish between different types of school. The school system will celebrate the values of the new social order in which consumerism and market values will rule.

But let's now look more closely at the nature of control operating within these systems and especially at their implications for teachers. Both TS and ERA privilege the consumer, the governors and principals of schools and, at least according to Kenneth Baker, teachers too (see Baker, in *The Times Educational Supplement*, 1988, p. 1). In both, this privilege is achieved through the position and powers which are allocated to the school governors (UK) or the boards (NZ). These administrative bodies will be 'free' to deploy resources according to their own educational needs and priorities. They will determine, for example, the number of teachers and non-teaching staff, will select and recommend appointments and will be able to recommend dismissals. But these freedoms will be exercised only within the parameters set by the curriculum guidelines, curriculum objectives, systems of testing (in the UK), and financial allocations, and they will be subject to considerable scrutiny, monitoring and control by central government. In NZ 'every two years the institutions and the Board's performance will be formally reviewed by a Review and Audit Agency . . .' (p. 4), while in the UK the way in which money is spent by schools and LEAs will be presented annually to the Secretary of State for Education. If 'returned' schools do not comply with the financial schemes (which were drawn up), the authority may suspend their rights to a delegated sum of money. If authorities do not submit a suitable scheme (of 'local financial management'), the Secretary of State will impose one (*ibid.*, p. 11). It is the teachers, however, who have most to lose in this consumer-led system and who may be greatly disadvantaged and disempowered in the implementation of ERA and TS.

In our view (Evans and Davies, 1988) the arrival of ERA may signify an important victory on the part of the central state in the battle for control over the labour process of schooling, over the large 'areas of uncertainty' in the educational system (the curriculum, pedagogy of schooling). In making this assertion we are reminded of Crozier's claim that 'the routinization of uncertainty removes power' (Pugh *et al.*, 1984). ERA and TS breach that domain. The implementation of national curriculum objectives and, in the UK, a regular system of testing, along with the powerful pull of consumer choice and demand from 'below' and financial restriction or inducement from 'above', are likely to facilitate a much more routinized performance of the knowledge production system. We will witness a process of 'technical

routinization' (Crozier, 1964), a process supported by a greater subtlety in the administrative structure through which this activity is controlled. As Reed points out,

Administrative rationalisation encourages self-conformity on the part of primary producers to the organisational discipline which a more advanced technical apparatus normally requires; primary producers (in this case teachers) are freed from the more constraining aspects of formal rules only to find themselves much more severely dictated to by the demands of the production cycle. Both strategies of technical and administrative rationalisation are supported by a managerial ideology which extols the virtue of socio-economic progress through increased organisational efficiency and denies the necessity for power struggles which threaten the continuous operation of the productive apparatus. Utilitarian goals and standards are emphasised as universal criteria to which all other particularistic values and practices should be subordinated. (Reed, 1985, p. 162)

Although ERA and TS celebrate the role of the professional, they both effectively strip teachers of much of their power and control in the educational process. It has been calculated, for example, that ERA delivers 175 new powers to the Secretary of State while others will be devolved to parents and governors. Teachers and other educationalists are both parties disempowered and deskilled. Although TS does not contain such massive centralist tendencies, its measures too substantially contain the interests and powers of teachers. As Walsh (1988) points out, TS

empowers principals, members of the Boards of Trustees, parents and even the community, and in so doing poses limits to the employment rights of teachers and other staff. Managerial authority is greatly enhanced. Basic scale teachers and support staff are to be appointed by the Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the principal, whilst senior staff are appointed by the Board on the recommendation of a staffing committee consisting of the principal, the chairperson of the Board and a teacher from another school designated by the Board. Teachers are to be assigned salaries on an individual basis by the Board. The Boards may choose to divert expenditure to other areas. Boards will develop their own systems for teacher appraisal and discipline. The priority rights scheme and the reservation of certain primary positions for graduates of teacher training are abolished. Most importantly, specific limits are set to staff representation on Boards of Trustees. Despite the importance of the Boards, and notwithstanding the Government's supposed commitment to the principles of industrial democracy, teachers are restricted to one representative on Boards, which is one more than the entitlement for non-teaching staff. Again, despite the Government's manifesto commitment to union representation in

board-level structures, *Tomorrow's Schools* is silent on any role for teacher unions in the new structure. Some indication as to their role may be gained from the rejection by the chief executive of the Department of Education of any union involvement in the working parties set up to advise on the implementation of *Tomorrow's Schools*.

The power of parents and the individual is celebrated at the same time as the state and governors (in the UK) and the board (in NZ) increase their control over the education process. The responsibilities of the professional are dramatically diminished. Now like Ranson (1988) we would argue that

a system which acclaims rights in the market against the values of justice is a system committed to inequality that is unlikely to require the consent of the public as a whole. In the misuse of power and its implicit valuing of unfairness and inequality this Bill (GERBIL) is unlikely to emulate its revered 1944 predecessor. (p. 18)

The same might also be said of *Tomorrow's Schools*. In our view however, Ranson badly underestimates both the level of consent that ERA and TS have achieved through the measures described earlier (and see Evans and Davies, 1988) amongst the public at large and the subtlety of both governments' methods of control over the education process. The public eye is *not* likely to see immediately the level and extent of control which we would argue, it is possible to identify. Both ERA and TS involve the cultivation of new processes of political and administrative manipulation through the agencies (governing bodies or boards) which will manage the systems. This is the politicization of bureaucracy to which Reed (1985) refers. It is control achieved through *co-optation* (Selznick, 1966), a process in which firstly what was previously a radical or liberal philosophy of 'grass root' control over policy implementation and professional practice has been 'captured' and reinterpreted so as to ensure policy outcomes of a much more conservative nature (Reed, 1985, p. 148). 'Opting out', 'open enrolment', 'parental say on governing bodies' or boards, is the language of opportunity not of constraint, it celebrates the spirit of the free market, of individual possession, involvement and control. As a good many others have pointed out this may result in less choice, more differentiation, renewed selection by ability, and a return to a more socially and educationally divided school and wider social system. But this is not obvious. The rhetoric of popular choice and higher standards for all through choice, local administration and competition may obscure the more sinister reality of a divided, unequal and rigged market (Wragg, 1988). Secondly, the process of co-optation involves a process of absorbing potentially dissenting elements (teachers and parents) into the leadership structures of the school. Both ERA and TS give governing bodies or Boards greater responsibilities for school budgets and the appointment, dismissal of staff as well as (in the UK) the capacity to overrule LEAs on the redeployment of staff, and they can acquire control of schools. Effectively government control is achieved through this greatly empowered

'strategic administrative agency'. In practice administrative bodies will tend to be dominated by local interest groups, the noisier more powerful middle class parents, overseen by officials (principals) whose careers are inevitably bound up with the future of their school who will have no choice but to make realistic adjustments to the demands and prejudices of their school localities.

The Seeds of Dissent?

There may be in the long term a political price to be paid for this form of control. Firstly, as Selznick found in his study of social and organizational change and the process of co-optation, there emerged an increasingly visible tension between the official doctrine of 'grass roots' control and the operation of that doctrine through an organizational strategy and structure which enhanced powerful local interests at the expense of disadvantaged groups. As a result managerial elites were increasingly forced to provide a public defence of their policy as it became evident that it inhibited the direct participation of local citizenry by forging commitments to sectional interests which were concerned to preserve the status quo (Reed, 1988, p. 153). Wragg (1988) cuttingly writes, in his criticisms of 'opting out' and the semi-privatized sector,

The outcome of the rigged market in a few years' time will then show to no-one's surprise, that the best scores in the first semi-privatized schools with their higher socio-economic intake, their enhanced income and their massive publicity from the government's own well oiled publicity machine, are indeed higher than those of local authority schools. It will be hailed as a triumph for the free market and the 1988 Act. It will in reality be nothing more than the victory of the athlete in the government-provided sports car over the runner whose ankles have been tied at the starting gate. (p. 13)

Secondly, the critical debates which foreran ERA and TS have had a profound effect not only on the way in which outside publics (parents, employers) think about schools and teachers, but also on the way teachers and pupils think about themselves, how they experience their jobs and schools as places of work. In effect ERA and TS and the intensification of monitoring, supervision and control which they herald, substantially reduce the flexibility and discretion enjoyed by teachers under the old system where an 'indulgency pattern of control' operated. The social and political consequences of this were clearly noted by Gouldner and are here neatly summarized by Reed (1988):

underlying stability facilitated by the indulgency pattern had been virtually destroyed and replaced by a more transient and fragile set

of understanding and relations which proved to be extremely brittle when new waves of organisational relationships became necessary. The shift to punishment centred bureaucracy as a mode of organisational assembly provided the mechanisms whereby an outbreak of industrial conflict could be temporarily settled without doing anything about the underlying causes of the conflict. Management would find it increasingly difficult if not impossible, under these circumstances to make further demands for moral commitment on the changes whereby the moral foundations of that normative involvement had been undermined. (p. 159)

In short, an increased level of control is accompanied by a diminished authority and legitimacy on the part of its perpetrators. Asking teachers to work harder (for the good of the children) may be very difficult to do in future years. Thirdly, we'd point out once again with Gouldner that the institutionalization of more formal rules governing practice (through testing, a national curriculum and curriculum objectives) may well enable governments to take control at a distance, but they will also constitute a definition of minimal standards allowing individuals to work at low levels of commitment (Pugh *et al.*, 1984, p. 23).

Together these contradictions in TS and ERA may well in the long run herald their demise as well as that of the governments which sponsored their development. On the evidence before us we would hazard a guess that in the meantime all is not going to be well for those currently entrapped in the reconstruction of our education system or the divided societies to which they give rise.

Note

- 1 This is a slightly modified version of a paper which was first given at the Research into Educational Policy Conference, NZER, 17-19 August 1988.

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The Great Education Reform Act and Tomorrow's Schools

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The Politics of Reforming Maori Education: The Transforming Potential of Kura Kaupapa Maori

Graham Hingangaroa Smith

Introduction

The most significant crisis presently confronting New Zealand educationists relates to high and disproportionate levels of *inequality* experienced by Maori both within and as a result of the education system. This situation is not a recent occurrence. Analyses of past policy initiatives have shown that policies ostensibly intended to alter this have not only failed, they have also acted detrimentally toward the interests of the very people they were supposed to assist.¹

This chapter seeks to understand why policy reform in relation to Maori has been so ineffective. It questions the *taken for granted* assumption that policy reform is *necessarily good* or that it inevitably leads to *better outcomes* and therefore acts *in the best interests* of those about to be reformed. Certainly, rhetoric designed to *sell* such reform is almost inevitably couched within these assumptions. The long-term consequences of educational policy-making for Maori have generally proven to be disastrous from the Maori point of view, as shown in the outcomes of severe cultural and language loss. These losses are the direct consequences of Maori people having very little meaningful influence in policy decision-making. Ironically, when these same outcomes are viewed from a colonizing and assimilationist perspective, these policies can be interpreted as having been most successful!

The arguments mounted in this chapter are not arguments against education reform or policy development and practice *per se*. They are arguments challenging those processes of reform and policy formulation which inhibit the efficacy of changes intended, and as far as Maori education has been concerned, have ultimately worked against Maori interests. They are arguments against complacency, against patronizing liberalism, against

overgeneralization, against uncritical thinking, against racist decision making, and against shallow, 'surface level' change.

A key assumption underpinning Maori education reform is that education plays a central and vital role in effecting wider societal reform. Solving the crisis in education correlates with solving crises within wider society. This link between education and societal change was alluded to recently in comments made by the Prime Minister, David Lange:

I took the education portfolio because it is the key to opportunity and the only means of ensuring genuine equality ...²

While not agreeing totally with the Prime Minister's position of placing 'absolute' faith in the education system, the potential of education reform to exercise some influence over wider social and economic conditions is recognized and supported by the arguments in this chapter. However, the Prime Minister's comments should also be criticized as being symptomatic of the very problems besetting educational policy-making. While the liberal stance implicit in these comments reflects genuine concern for changing the material conditions of schooling experience for Maori, deeper structural considerations remain unacknowledged. This chapter develops the position that any meaningful reform in Maori education must not only initiate change of *overt* influences but must also effect the change of *covert* influences, that is, not only change the material conditions within education, but also stimulate more fundamental structural change at the levels of ideology and power relations. The arguments developed in this chapter insist that past policy-making and subsequent reform initiatives in respect of Maori education have been limited because they have mostly initiated *surface* level changes and have tended to ignore more fundamental issues. Of significance is the extent to which this *failure* of educational policy reform can be attributed to a deliberate assimilatory colonizing intent, or to unconscious and unintended actions of supposedly benevolent Pakeha concern.

The continued inability of policy-makers seriously to challenge and alter these crisis trends has led to growing Maori frustration, disillusionment and impatience with state, Pakeha education. Recent developments by Maori people to establish Te Kohanga Reo (*language nurseries*) and Kura Kaupapa Maori (*Maori philosophy and language primary schooling*) as options outside the state education system are direct responses to the perceived failing of state education in respect of Maori expectations and aspirations.

This chapter examines Kura Kaupapa Maori from the viewpoint that increasing numbers of disaffected Maori parents are making significant alternative educational decisions and choices. Why have they made these choices? What have they chosen as appropriate schooling? What is being said to state educational policy-makers? Given the major administrative reforms of the educational system, and the need to avoid the *status quo* situation of policy impotency and, conversely, the need for meaningful structural change, these questions need to be addressed urgently.

Education for Whose End?

Debate surrounding Maori education and educational policy-making has intensified recently because of the reforms in almost every sector of New Zealand education. We have seen an escalation in educational discussion and debate — for example: *The Curriculum Review*;³ the Royal Commission on Social Policy;⁴ the Picot Commission on Educational Administration⁵; the Government Review Committee on Te Kohanga Reo;⁶ the Devolution of Maori Affairs.⁷ Many major educational conferences on Maori education have also been held in the last five years, for example:

- 1984 Maori Educational Development conference, NZ Maori Council, Turangawaewae
- 1984 PPTA National Education Hui, PPTA, Waahi
- 1985 Maori Economic Development Conference, Government, Wellington
- 1985 Pacific Islands Education Forum, PPTA, Auckland
- 1986 NZEI National Hui on Maori Education, NZEI, Turangawaewae
- 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987 National Hui: Te Kohanga Reo

Added to this climate of heightened activity and interest in Maori education is an emerging debate among Pakeha radical and liberal reformists on the one hand and Pakeha conservatives (exemplified by the New Right) on the other, who are engaged in a major philosophical and theoretical territorial dispute marked by definition and redefinition of key educational rhetoric. These struggles have focused upon the extent to which economic considerations should be emphasized or deemphasized within education. Current reforms have clearly shown the state position to be now intent upon restructuring the education system by applying an economic model of a market led education system, able to react more responsively and *efficiently* to the needs of its *consumers*.⁸ Some critics have referred to this process as the *commodification* of the education system.⁹ The outcome of this struggle between dominant, Pakeha, interest groups, will inevitably be handed down to influence new policies and initiatives in respect of Maori educational needs.

The fact that Pakeha education decision-makers have been less than successful in the task of education reform in the past will again be ignored. It is likely that the solutions will again fall into the *trap* of being additive *sticking plaster* measures, when more fundamental structural changes are required.

The wider parameters of these debates are located in the struggle to determine what should be the fundamental purpose and direction of New Zealand education. The philosophical underpinning of present policy direction is grounded in Peter Fraser's 1939 statement of intent as Minister of Education:

that every person whatever his level of academic ability, whether

he be rich or poor, whether he live in town or country, has a right as a citizen to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted and to the fullest extent of his powers.¹⁰

This philosophy of *equality* was further entrenched into policy through the 1962 Currie Commission Report.¹¹ McCulloch (1988) has identified three closely related themes evident in the Report:

first, that equality of opportunity for all was the central aspiration of New Zealand education and of the community at large; second that the education system was progressing steadily toward the realisation of this principle; and third, that state activity was benevolent and should be employed to encourage the further progress of this system. (p. 1)

It has been the failure of the education system to realize the promises of *equality* of opportunity and *equality* of outcomes for large numbers of Pakeha and Maori that has added fuel to the present debate. The persistence of *inequality* as the outcome of education and schooling continues to be the experience of many pupils despite numerous policy attempts to overcome this trend. Constant criticism and debate attacking the failure of liberal and conservative education policy by radical educationists has resulted in a generally unexpected outcome.

The new ground occupied by Liberal and Conservative policy-makers has sought to appropriate 'equality' by couching unequal outcomes as achieving 'equity'. It does this by portraying equity within the rhetoric of individual (consumer) rights,¹² within a context of judging worth by its market value. Thus in the draft school charter and within several of the *Tomorrow's Schools* working party reports, this statement setting out the new official paramount purpose of education appears, supplanting a commitment in earlier drafts to the Treaty of Waitangi:

The needs of children and their learning shall be paramount and therefore the Boards of Trustees must ensure that all students are provided with an education that respects their dignity, rights and individuality and challenges them to reach their full potential. All school activities should be designed to advance these purposes.¹³

It is likely that this purpose will be given more weight than the draft charter's guidelines on goals of social equality in terms of monitorable outcomes. A Board could justify its decision not to shift more resources to its Maori pupils by citing this paramount principle, evincing concern about the rights of other pupils.

If the social equality goals are not given the weight and resourcing that will need to occur, then their very presence in the school charters will give New Right interests the simultaneous look of being concerned with equality, whilst being able to shift the continuing problem of inequality of outcome onto the victims. The failure of equality as a goal of the reforms will be

attributed to the failure of Maori to take advantage of 'new opportunities'.

The predisposition of past educational policy-makers to view *education, schooling and knowledge* as being inherently *good*, or *neutral* and acting in the *best interests* of all concerned, has had the hegemonic effect of protecting the system from serious critical enquiry. These false perceptions have contributed to maintaining the present situation in regard to continuing Maori difficulties in education. It has been the preoccupation with these false assumptions that has created a misplaced emphasis upon *victim blaming* research. The result of this research orientation has been the development of particular types of educational policy aimed at Maori and their various impediments rather than critically analyzing the *system* and its associated structures. Recent concern to centralize key questions which focus upon the working of the system has provided reason to rethink current educational policy. For example, questions such as *What is to count as knowledge? — How should knowledge be taught? — Whose interests does the knowledge taught serve?* have clearly focused on the taken for granted structures and functioning of the education system as a whole.¹⁴

These critical perspectives have long been held by many Maori people. Such criticisms have been couched in overt acts of collective *resistance*,¹⁵ as well as *resistance* on an individual scale. The following popular folk song was composed during the 1950s by Tuini Ngawai of Ngati Porou, Tokomaru Bay, and succinctly portrays the critical thinking of Maori even at that time.¹⁶

TE MATAURANGA O TE PAKEHA
(The knowledge of the Pakeha)
HE MEA WHAKATO HEI TINANATANGA
(Is propagated and nurtured)
MO WAI RA? HO HATANA?
(For whose benefit? For Satan's?)
KIA TUPATO I NGÄ WHAKAWÄI
(Be careful of its temptations)
KIA KAHÄ RA, KIA KAHÄ RA
(Be strong, Be steadfast)¹⁷

Two of the most powerful and direct statements of *resistance* to aspects of the present Pakeha education system are to be seen in the development and continuing success of Te Kohanga Reo and Kaupapa Maori schooling.¹⁸

Kura Kaupapa Maori

Kura Kaupapa Maori are primary school initiatives based on Maori philosophy and Maori principles of teaching and learning. Kaupapa Maori philosophy takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Maori knowledge,

pedagogy and cultural practice. It asserts the *right* of the taangata whenua (*indigenous people*) and their culture to exist and to continue to flourish in Aotearoa. Of central importance is the revival and survival of spoken Maori language. These schools use *total immersion* methodology, teaching and learning wholly through Maori language. This philosophy, *regenerated* by Te Kohanga Reo early childhood education, has been translated into a schooling option for 'primary-school' aged graduates of Te Kohanga Reo. The success of Te Kohanga Reo and conversely the inability of present state schooling adequately to meet the language and pedagogical needs of Te Kohanga Reo graduates has provided the impetus for the establishment of these schools. At present there are four different schools²⁰ which fit the classification of Kaupapa Maori schooling.²⁰ All of these schools have developed *outside* the state schooling system, through the initiative and collected resources of the parents and communities concerned. Kura Kaupapa Maori has been forced to develop outside the present state schooling structures to enable these schools to have increased *power* (and less dominant group interference) over key educational decision-making. The establishment of Kura Kaupapa Maori and the growing and, as yet, unfulfilled demand for such schooling, is an endorsement of the view that present state educational structures are having difficulty responding adequately to meet the preferred educational needs and interests of Maori pupils.

Dr Peter Sharples,²¹ one of the principal founders of the first Kaupapa Maori School, 'Te Kura o Hoani Waititi' (*Hoani Waititi School* Glen Eden, Auckland), listed the following contributing reasons leading to the establishment of the school: frustration with waiting for the system to move towards suitable programming for Te Kohanga Reo graduates; realization that the system did not have sufficient or qualified resources; the desire to ensure that what was taught and how it was taught was 'Tuturu-Maori' (*authentic Maori*) based on the principles and practices already established in Te Kohanga Reo; to have the power to ensure that what was to be taught and how it was to be taught were decisions based on *Maori* principles.²²

Kaupapa Maori schooling directly challenges the state schooling system, by implementing major structural change outside the state system; changes that challenge the narrow state schooling definitions of what is to count as valid knowledge. The deeper cost of state schooling for subordinate Maori interests has been penetrated and exposed by Kaupapa Maori schooling; the relationship between political control and the education system is made clearly visible. State schooling has served as an instrument by which dominant Pakeha interests such as *colonization* and *assimilation* processes have been conveniently facilitated, achieving these ends by influencing the *meaning* of education. Kaupapa Maori schooling has lifted the veil of mystique surrounding taken for granted notions of *valid knowledge* and has exposed *knowledge* and *learning* as social constructions serving dominant Pakeha interests. The *hidden curriculum* of New Zealand education and schooling is about the maintenance of Pakeha social, political, economic and cultural

control, from the covert impact of ideologies related to the superiority of Pakeha knowledge and culture²³ to the overt actions of strapping children for speaking Maori language at school.²⁴ While educationalists have been able to deal with visible manifestations of dysfunction related to Maori education, they have neglected submerged agendas which have continued silently to subvert Maori interests.

Kaupapa Maori schooling is Maori derived and implemented. The validity and legitimacy of Maori knowledge, pedagogy and culture are taken for granted. Maori needs are given priority and care; conversely the inhibiting effects of covert, subversive ideologies (which are embedded in dominant Pakeha state schooling structures) are removed. Within Kaupapa Maori schooling Maori language and culture are central and important components. Maori people are able to select those curriculum items which *they* consider important for their children, and which provide increased choices enabling children to participate more fully in the *total* New Zealand society. The outcome of total immersion Maori language schooling is bilingual and bicultural competencies; expertise in both Maori and English languages and cultures.

Kaupapa Maori schooling provides a glimmer of hope for the revitalization of *oral* Maori language and culture, and it embraces Maori optimism regarding the possibilities of their intervention in the crisis situation of Maori performance within state education.²⁵

The Power Relations Context

The Maori educational crisis needs to be analyzed within a theoretical framework of contested power relations in order to understand the actions of Maori people as they react to, and mediate the political context of New Zealand society in defence of their language and cultural aspirations. In New Zealand the state education system endorses the social, political and cultural structures of wider Pakeha dominant society. A converse position is also true, that wider Pakeha dominant society endorses the structures of the education system. Within the New Zealand democratic context the numeric advantage, approximately 7:1, of the Pakeha population ensures the maintenance of Pakeha *control* and *influence* over almost all political, economic and social resources. It is therefore the cultures and the interests of dominant Pakeha society that are endorsed as '*the culture*' and '*the interests*' of the state structures, including the education system. Pakeha cultural capital is firmly embedded in the structures of schooling and education. What happens in New Zealand schools is subject to the control of the numerically advantaged who may assert their dominance by the power of *veto* or by the manipulation of their numerical strength within the protection of *democracy*. It is the dominant cultural group or selected members from within the group who are able to influence what is to count as valid, acceptable knowledge, culture

and language at every level, from the majority of teachers at the classroom level, to the majority of members on Boards of Trustees at the organization level. Acceptable knowledge is maintained and protected by a variety of visible and hidden gate-keeping strategies: for example, in culturally biased methods of evaluation that ensure that *success* within the school system is nearly always predetermined by the rules as prescribed by the dominant group;²⁶ in the establishment of curriculum hierarchies which reflect the endorsement of the dominant culture and the relatively low priority given to those areas which do not conform to the norms, values and expectations of the dominant group;²⁷ in the fostering of depositing myths;²⁸ in the manipulation of resources;²⁹ in the imposing of economic sanctions;³⁰ in such devices as institutionalized racism;³¹ or in the manipulation of immigration policies.³²

New Zealand schools are locked into a cycle of social and cultural reproduction of Pakeha culture premised on an imperialistic presumption that Pakeha defined cultural capital is the *most appropriate* for all New Zealand's peoples. Herein lies the difficulty of Maori people attempting to realize support for *their* educational preferences within state:Pakeha:dominant education. No matter how much emphasis is given to adjusting, adding or initiating programmes to meet Maori needs, they are subject to moderation by dominant interests. The history of successive failures of educational reform to alter the continued educational crisis experienced by most Maori can be attributed to the policy reformers' failure to take cognizance of unequal power distribution in New Zealand society, and within education.

The Ideological Context

While education analysts have been able readily to identify, describe and at times critically engage the *overt* practices and actions of colonization embedded in educational policy, they have been mostly unable and perhaps unwilling to confront critically and deal with the powerful ideologies which *inform* such practice. Such shallow analyses have been quite inadequate and have failed to dislodge, to any meaningful degree, the processes of colonization within education.

The original subversive ideologies which underpinned the colonizing activities of the first Europeans who arrived in New Zealand remain relatively intact; as effective, as potent and as dangerous as they were when original European settlement began in earnest. These ideologies have remained influential beneath the surface of New Zealand society, thoroughly embedded in all existing societal structures including the education system.

Two of the most effective ideologies militating against Maori interests are the belief in the *superiority of Pakeha knowledge and cultural norms* and the belief in the *liberating potential of Pakeha knowledge and learning*. It is the counter logic of these two ideologies, their negative mode, that cuts at the heart of

Maori knowledge, language and culture: the belief that *Maori language and culture are inferior to that of the Pakeha and that it is of little practical use within the modern technocratic society as defined by Pakeha.*

Such detrimental and powerful ideologies have not only become entrenched within the structures of state education. They have also become hegemonically internalized by some Maori. The education system has provided fertile ground for the continued propagation of these ideologies, and its *self-preserving* mechanisms also ensure that meaningful attempts to deal with the visible symptoms of Maori educational crises are seldom successful, being thwarted by the counteractive influence of dominant ideologies maintaining the status quo. Solutions which attempt to alleviate Maori difficulties within education rarely acknowledge, confront, or deal with these ideological forces. Until they are *recognized and effectively controlled for*, educational experience for most Maori will continue to be an *unequal experience*, with *unequal outcomes*, contradicting prevalent overt liberal views held within New Zealand education, related to *equality* (as expressed earlier in two Prime Ministers' phrases).

In summary, what is problematic here is whether the dominant Pakeha education system in general, and schooling in particular, will ever be able to provide *equitably, fairly or justly* for Maori perceived needs through its present structures, or indeed if at all. Kaupapa Maori schooling development is a conscious resistance to the contaminating influences of Pakeha social and cultural reproduction processes embedded in state structures. The detrimental ideological forces of assimilation and colonization are being confronted and dealt with by a withdrawal strategy. Maori parents have assumed greater control over the meaningful decision-making related to their children's education, and Kaupapa Maori schooling has given Maori parents increased power to determine *what* their children should be taught, *how* it should be taught, by *whom*, *when* and so on. More importantly, Maori people have not only assumed greater freedom from the inhibiting influences of state education = assimilation = colonization; they have set in place powerful, alternative structures which endorse the validity and legitimacy of Maori knowledge, language and culture, and which penetrate dominant Pakeha constructions related to control of education. The logic behind New Zealand state schooling is being demystified and its reproductive function of dominant Pakeha ideology, knowledge, skills, and culture exposed.³³ Maori people have created their own *choices* in education; they are exercising choice and '*voting with their feet*'; this withdrawal strategy is entirely appropriate when put in a cultural framework of *mana, whakama, whakaiti*.³⁴

Many of the inhibiting features of past policy initiatives are replicated in the current reforms.³⁵ It seems necessary to restate yet again these areas of discontent voiced with increasing frequency and increasing volume by Maori people at Maori education *hui*; education courses; written submissions to various government departmental review committees, commissions, task forces; Waitangi Tribunal hearings, newspaper articles both in formal Marae

and everyday conversations. Current education reforms appear yet again to summarily dismiss the majority of these concerns.³⁶ The critical question to be asked of the current reforms is: will intended policy initiatives and reforms continue to militate against the language and cultural interests of Maori people, through the 'tried and true' practices of

- (i) pepper potting Maori educational administrators throughout different levels of the education hierarchy, thus rendering them less effective because they are vulnerable to dominant group controlling techniques, for example, cooption, marginalization, etc.;
- (ii) Pakeha people continuing to have the major say in respect of Maori language and cultural decision-making. History has shown that this situation is antagonistic to Maori language and cultural aspirations;
- (iii) limited decision-making of Maori within education and schooling; the problem of whether or not the suggested structures will adequately serve Maori people, so that they are fairly represented on Boards of Trustees and are able to *influence* sufficiently the content of school charters to meet their needs.³⁷

Will the ability of twenty-one or more parents to initiate their own school put sufficient pressure on schools where Maori are numerically in a minority? Will this theoretical ability to initiate one's own group-based school allow the long needed rapid expansion of Kaupapa Maori schooling?

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to give a wide ranging analysis of the reasons that contribute to the continued failure of educational reform in regard to Maori. This chapter has also indicated that the means to alter this trend of *reform failure* may be found in a close analysis of Kura Kaupapa Maori schooling; that Kura Kaupapa Maori provides the radical potential to *transform* Maori schooling experience generally — not only for children from Te Kohanga Reo with specific language and cultural needs, but also Maori children in state schooling generally.

Kaupapa Maori schooling by its mere presence, let alone success, demands that dominant Pakeha interest groups relinquish *power* and *resources* to Maori people to enable Maori people to take greater control over their own lives, as guaranteed under the *Treaty of Waitangi*. In regard to education, this will require the devolution of resources and decision-making power to Maori people; but most importantly it does not absolve or free the state of its continuing responsibility to ensure that the obligations implicit within the *Treaty of Waitangi* are maintained.

Pessimistic forecasts suggest that current education reforms at all levels exhibit many of the past impediments and hindrances which have undermined meaningful reform:³⁸ from the exclusion of Maori people from key

decision-making to the Pakeha *cooption* of 'Maori' people to serve dominant interests; from *selected* consultations with Pakeha *chosen* Maori experts to *gatekeeping* strategies such as unrealistic time frames in which to prepare reports. Despite the continuance of these assimilatory strategies, the *emancipatory* potential of Kura Kaupapa Maori remains because of its existence outside the direct state Pakeha dominant interference. In the words of Peter Sharples, speaking about Kura Kaupapa Maori:

This is a new ball game now. We make the rules, we have our own equipment. This is not a separatist movement — Pakeha people can play this game, but they have to play by our rules and with our gear!³⁹

Through having to pay the state in order to rent facilities in which to teach, having to find funds to pay teachers' salaries, having to spend countless hours producing learning materials and resources, having to make repairs and fund building maintenance, having to travel great distances to get to school, Maori parents have been forced to become politicized in order to understand more clearly the enormous contradictions of their lived reality: *unjust contradictions which go far beyond the cultural difference explanations between Maori and Pakeha, contradictions that connect with broader oppositions; between the state and the individual; the colonizers and the indigenous people; the powerful and the powerless; the oppressors and the oppressed.*

Maori commitment to maintaining language and culture and therefore their unique heritage has long been charted by *nga tupuna* (ancestors). It is these sentiments which are encompassed within the ancient and frequently quoted *whakatauki* (proverb):

E Kore Koe e ngaro
He Kakano i ruia mai i Rangiatea
You shall not die out
You are from the seed planted in Rangiatea.⁴⁰

Notes

- 1 Smith, G.H. (1988) 'Pikau: A burden for one's back', *Access*, 7. See also Simon (1988).
- 2 Lange, R.D. (Rt Hon) (1988) 'An education task', address to Auckland College of Education, 21 October.
- 3 *The Curriculum Review* (1987), Wellington, Government Printer.
- 4 *Report of the Royal Commission on Social Policy* (1988) Wellington, Government Printer, April.
- 5 *Administering for Excellence* (1988) (Report of the Task Force to Review Educational Administration), Wellington, Government Printer.
- 6 'The review of Te Kohanga Reo' (1988) unpublished report.

- 7 *Te Uru Pare Rangapu* (1988) (Report on the Devolution of Maori Affairs), Wellington, Government Printer.
- 8 See current government policy documents on (a) *Before Five* (1989) concerning pre-school education; (b) *Tomorrow's Schools* (1988) concerning primary and secondary education; and (c) *Learning for Life* (1989) concerning tertiary education.
- 9 For example, Grace (1988).
- 10 Currie, G., et al. (1962) *Report of the Commission on Education in New Zealand*, Wellington, Government Printer.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 The Treasury (1987) *Government Management: Brief to the Incoming Government*, Vol. 11, Educational Issues, Wellington, Government Printer.
- 13 The School Charter (March 1989). This statement appears as a non-discretionary item within all school charters; in fact this statement appears twice in the charter.
- 14 Following Young (1971).
- 15 Compare Smith (1985), Walker (1984), Smith (1983) and Awatere (1985).
- 16 Tuini Ngawai was a very famous Maori composer and performing artist of the 1940s and 1950s; her folk songs covered many topical issues of those times.
- 17 From Stirling and Salmond (1980).
- 18 The notion of *resistance* used here follows Giroux and Apple.
- 19 Peel (1988).
- 20 'Kura Kaupapa Maori o Waipareira' at Kelston School for the Deaf; 'Kura Paupapa Maori o Hoani Waititi' at the Hoani Waititi Marae, Glen Eden; 'Kura Kaupapa Maori o Ruamataa' at Rotorua; 'Kura Kaupapa Maori o Otautahi' at Christchurch.
- 21 Dr Peter Sharples is Director of Hoani Waititi Marae. The school began in February 1985.
- 22 Dr P. Sharples (personal communication) (1984).
- 23 Refer to Simon (1982).
- 24 Sir James Henare evidence to the Waitangi Tribunal hearing 'Kai whakapunau ki te Reo Claim' (1986) Wellington, Government Printer.
- 25 For a more expansive discussion on Maori performance within state education see Benton (1987).
- 26 Cf Mitchell (1984).
- 27 Cf Gadd (1984).
- 28 Cf Simon (1982).
- 29 Cf Douglas (1984).
- 30 Cf Bedgood (1980).
- 31 Cf Nairn (1984).
- 32 Cf Simon (1988).
- 33 This point follows Pierre Bourdieu's notion of social and cultural reproduction.
- 34 Mana — dignity (can also mean prestige, status, power); Whakaiti — humility, self-effacement; Whakama — embarrassment (shame, openness).
- 35 *Before Five, Tomorrow's Schools, Learning for Life*.
- 36 Compare analysis of the Picot Report, *Administering for Excellence* by Smith (1988b).
- 37 Boards of Trustees elections were held in May 1989. An initial impression is that Maori are seriously underrepresented.
- 38 For example 'Picot and beyond', *Access*, 7 (1988).
- 39 Personal communication (1988).
- 40 The original homeland of Maori people.

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The Politics of Reforming Maori Education

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and other groups which currently benefit relatively little from schooling in economic terms — and in terms of credentials?

My study of a group of nineteen working class Pacific Island girls in an Auckland girls' secondary school provides insight into some working class girls' experiences and perceptions of schooling (Jones, 1987a).² The girls were in a middle-to-low stream fifth form in a single-sex state school.³ Their parents were generally employed in so-called unskilled and semi-skilled manual work in the inner city area. The girls — 5 Mason — were positively motivated towards school which they believed could provide them with qualifications for a 'good' job, and escape from the occupational fates of their mothers. Despite rather poor past educational achievement they spent most of their time at school working hard at a given syllabus.

These girls' view of their schooling was quite unexpected in the context of some other research on working class students' responses to school. While the girls in my study valued school achievement and held the view that schooling is in everyone's interests, many other studies indicate that working class female and male students in 'low' streams are typically anti-school.⁴

Judging by their uncooperativeness in the previous year, one could be forgiven for believing they did reject school. But this was not the case. They had simply made a pragmatic decision: they felt that hard work in the fourth form was not essential to getting job 'qualifications' which were gained the next year via School Certificate examinations. Thus their misbehaviour in the fourth form did *not* mean they rejected the 'values' of the school (such as school achievement), which some writers have suggested is a feature of low stream working class subcultural responses to school. They 'behaved' in the fifth form, because it was 'qualifications year'.

These girls were strong believers in the value of educational qualifications as a necessary preparation for the 'good' jobs they hoped to achieve. Therefore they 'worked hard' at school in an attempt to gain those qualifications. They considered their education and employment were just as important as those of boys; they expected to contribute to the family income on leaving school. Thus, attempting to acquire qualifications via schooling for these girls was a central part of a strategy for future economic survival.⁵

Indeed, their views can be understood as an aspect of a rational strategy for attempting to solve the problems that confront them, and to gain some control over their present and future lives.

In his celebrated book *Learning to Labour*, Willis (1977) makes this same point in a study of a very different working class response to school — that of rebellious working class white adolescent males in Britain. He argues that the beliefs and actions of anti-school working class 'lads' are a positive cultural expression — a product of the boys' attempt to make sense of, and make the best of, the material situation in which they exist. The lads spend their time at school (when they attend) having a 'laff' at the teacher's expense, not doing any school work, and generally fooling around. They do not *want* school qualifications; according to Willis, they basically 'reject the idea of

qualifications' because they do not need them (p. 94). They have made a positive 'objective decision' to apply their labour power to manual work (p. 2); in particular that manual work demanded by jobs on the shop floor. Such work is glorified as tough, exciting, real work, and the people who do it are admirable and worthwhile. Non-physical, 'pen-pushing' work is denigrated as 'cissie' and boring as are those who perform that work, and who attempt to get the necessary qualifications at school.

This 'decision' to do manual work, the subsequent rejection of school and the inversion of the school's valuing of mental over manual labour are, according to Willis, rational responses to the lads' class location and the fact that, beyond the conditions of their fathers' work, there is no real alternative ('the possibility of real upward mobility seems so remote as to be meaningless', p. 126). All that is available to them is 'making the best of hard and brutalizing conditions' which characterize the work which inevitably confronts them (pp. 52 and 197).

Willis argues that the lads reject the apparent offer of the school: knowledge, 'qualifications' and success in exchange for respect, conformity and hard work. It would involve them in giving up too much of what they value, such as autonomy and masculinity, for dubious reward (Willis, 1983, p. 129).

The New Zealand working class girls in 5 Mason, on the other hand, make a different evaluation of the costs and benefits involved, and opt for a different strategy — of accommodation to the school's apparent offer. Unlike the lads, they *want* what the school has to offer — 'qualifications' — and as the school is where they are provided, the school cannot rationally be rejected. (Ultimately, the school did not provide the girls with the 'qualifications' they wanted and needed, despite their efforts.)

In general terms, it is quite possible that *all* students eventually make evaluations of the costs and benefits involved in the apparent 'exchange' offered by the school, and work out some strategy for dealing with school in terms of those evaluations. This is a way of understanding their perceptions of and responses to school. It is also possible that the class culture of the parents' workplace is an important basis on which children assess the value of schooling, and the school's 'offer'.

Whereas the lads' fathers glorify their work on the shop floor and denigrate useless 'theory' — which translates into a rejection of school knowledge by their sons — the 5 Mason girls' parents do not endorse their conditions of work. Quite the opposite.

The seemingly admirable quality of *male* physical work (however false the glorification might be) is not available to working class *women* destined for work in the factory, the laundry, hotel, cleaning the office floor, or even in the ranks of 'junior clerical'. There is no such positive image for women outside the home; working class women have no 'workplace culture' to celebrate. The image of work for the 5 Mason girls' mothers, sisters and thus for them was usually drudgery and sheer hard work.

- Noeline: You see some people with factory jobs and they come home and they're all dirty and tired and they get angry easily.
- Martha: Look at my mum. She's got a crook back from working at that factory. She gets tired and crook.
- Elizabeth: (My sister) was working when she was pregnant and in that factory you have to do a lot of heavy lifting. Because of all that (?) she had a miscarriage.
- Linda: In a shop is better (than factory work) but it's a stink job really ... (why?) ... Oh its boring and you're like a machine getting this, doing that, smile ... b-o-o-ring! I just wanna decent job.

While Willis' lads and their fathers glorify their work, in the only reference made to the lads' *mothers'* work experience, the reality of many working class women's lives is incidentally revealed (Willis, 1977, p. 100).

- PW: Are you looking forward to work?
- Joey: Yes, if everybody don't start putting me off it. Our old lady, the first thing her said when her fuckin' woke me up this morning, her said 'Oh, I don't want to go to work'. So I says, 'I fucking do, I don't mind, I'll start'. Then her fucking said 'You'll hate it, you'll hate it'.

My discussions with the 5 Mason girls revealed similar sentiments.

- AJ: What about your Mum's work — what's that like?
- Sina: She doesn't talk about it much. She gets tired a lot and doesn't like shift work because of the kids.
- Linda: I feel sorry for my mother. She doesn't like working in the laundry. She changed from her other factory job but it's no different. She always says 'work hard at school! Don't end up like me! No good!'

These girls do not have much alternative but to seek escape from their mothers' position within the labour market and what it means in terms of work conditions.

As the unemployment rate for Polynesian adolescents in New Zealand is conservatively between 13 and 25 per cent (compared with 9 per cent for Pakcha),⁶ a (highly likely) possibility for these Polynesian young women is unemployment. Faced with this situation, it would seem likely that some working class girls will truant and 'play up' in the classroom, rejecting school as useless to solving the problem of gaining work which is objectively unavailable to them. However, this option is rejected by the girls in 5 Mason who believe that hard work at school will allow them to avoid unemployment.

- Donna: I have chances if I stay at school, qualifications for a decent job.

Elizabeth: I want to get my School C because I want a good job when I leave school.

Linda: Some are brainier than others so they get the jobs.

For many other working class girls, the alternative to 'stink' jobs, or unemployment, is marriage and child care. This leads to a different response to school. McRobbie (1978) demonstrated in her study of a group of white English working class girls that the 'mediations' between working class families and their daughters' response to school are based not just on the nature of female working class experience of wage labour, but also on the primary role of women as housewives. The girls' perceptions of their future role in the home relegated school work to a secondary position and they rejected school because 'we're just interested in other things' (Maggie aged 14) (p. 103). These working class girls weighed up the costs and benefits of the 'exchange' offered by the school; and just as the 'lads' saw that accepting the school's 'offer' would mean losing too much, these girls also believed they risked losing the feminine ideal — attractiveness, boyfriends, marriage — in conforming to school. Therefore they rejected the school's demand for neatness, diligence, passivity and replaced it with a feminine anti-school culture obsessed with boys, sex and fashion.

Moran (1983) too, in her study of working class Australian girls (of mixed ethnic origin), showed that the girls' acceptance of their mothers' work as housewives meant that they chose pursuing relationships with boys above participation in school activities. These girls did not regard formal education as a viable way of getting the knowledge needed to achieve what they saw as their interests — or at least, schooling did not offer them any real alternative to what was apparently available to them.

As yet, we do not know to what extent this research also reflects the experience and interpretations of Pakeha or Maori working class girls in New Zealand.

Unlike the subjects of McRobbie's and Moran's studies, the Pacific Island working class girls in 5 Mason were not concerned with the same norms of female sexual identity, and marriage as an end in itself. Female adolescent sexual activity or even contact with the opposite sex was strictly limited. The 5 Mason girls were expected to have little to do with boys while they were at school, and this was largely the case. They did not have the same obsessively romantic ideas about boyfriends as the girls in McRobbie's or Moran's studies and, indeed, often preferred female company.

Lilly: I'd rather have fun with just us girls than go around with boys.

Noeline: You find that once a girl gets a boyfriend she's drawn away from the gang.

Although they read popular magazines and discussed the physical merits of the (especially black) males in the glossy photos, and talked about marriage or 'dating', they often said,

Repeka: Boys and school work don't mix. It's good to just stick to your work and go for boys later.

Their parents were always strict about this:

Lilly: My parents would be totally against it (going out with boys) while I'm still at school. They probably wouldn't mind once I start working and earning my own wages and that.

AJ: Why?

Lilly: They'd probably think I'd get more into him than my school work which would probably be true.

The girls considered marriage and child-bearing as inevitable aspects of their future, but not as exclusive of work. Their wage is as vital to the (extended) family as is a man's, and child care is often organized around both parents' work hours, with relatives heavily involved. This emphasis on the importance of wage labour, combined with their understanding of the undesirable conditions of their mothers' work, means that the 5 Mason girls have little alternative but to accept the apparently available 'offer' of the school.

These working class girls' beliefs about avoiding unemployment, and their decision not to apply their labour power to degrading boring work or exclusively to domestic work, mean they do not/cannot develop a counter-school culture. They do not merely passively conform to school, but actively take its 'offer' at face value.

The girls' beliefs about opportunity and schooling emerge within the generally prevailing (though demonstrably false) ideology that New Zealand is a classless and egalitarian society with open opportunities for the bright and motivated to be socially mobile.

This ideology gains strength for these girls in the context of their own particular history. As Polynesian immigrants, the girls' parents were recruited into a subordinate section of the labour hierarchy in New Zealand (Spoonley, 1982). The Pacific Island migrants' response to their economic subordination was to desire escape from this situation for their children. The prevailing liberal theory of the school's provision of economic opportunity meant that they saw the *school* as offering their children this chance.

This is a characteristic response of immigrants entering a wage labour society. Studies of American immigrant groups (Hogan, 1982) and black immigrants to Britain (Troyna, 1984; Loudon, 1978) show that they are often committed to what Troyna calls 'the ideology of credentialism', and seek to succeed economically through gaining educational credentials. In her study of Australian working class girls, Moran states that the European immigrants' parents

... are concerned that their children should not be forced to work in factories as many of them have. They would like their children and particularly their daughters ... to work in a white collar job of some description. They would like their children to 'have it easier'

than they have, and they all believe education is crucial to attaining this goal. (p. 7)

Studies by Pitt and MacPherson (1974) and Fairbairn-Dunlop (1981) of Samoan parents in New Zealand clearly illustrate the predominance of the notion of education as guarantor of economic opportunity.

Education for many Samoan parents (is) equated with social and economic mobility, a chance to better the present position of the parents. Coming from a society such as Samoa where there (are) few chances of advancement through traditional means, the Samoan parents perceive the New Zealand social structure as being an 'open' one, and (have) high hopes for their children's success. This was the tenor of all the respondents' replies: that their children should use the educational chances they had so that they could not be forced to work for the rest of their lives 'in dumb factory jobs like us'.

We say to them, 'Do you want to spend the rest of your life in a factory like us? Then go to school'.

He come home, I say, 'What did you do at school today?' All they do is sing songs. I say, 'That's no good. You go for a job ... you can't sing a song'. (p. 191)

Many parents in Fairbairn-Dunlop's study wanted their children to go to university and get professional jobs.

Such views meant that the 5 Mason girls felt a keen sense of obligation to grasp the opportunity supposedly offered by the school — an obligation reinforced by their parents' pressure on them to succeed.

Mele: My parents want me to come to school to get a good education and for the future ... I don't like what my parents say ... they push me too hard and they want me to get School C just like that in the first year (the first attempt). But they can't force people to get that you know, things are too hard from now on.

Noeline: What's going to happen if you don't pass? Some girls I know if they don't get their School C they get a good hiding.

Mele: Yes, it's true. Yes, if you don't get it they think you muck around too much and wag school and all this. I'm sure I'll get a hiding ... especially if I don't pay myself.⁷

Elizabeth: My dad just sort of threatens me, but he doesn't ...

Lilly: My mother wants me to go to university. I said to her if I pass School C and I'm going in the 6th form and I get a chance of a nursing course, I'm going to take it and she told me not to, she told me to go to university and sit your degree and that. (Laughter)

Mele: It's easy for them to say because they're not sit exam, but us we sit on our bum and study our heart out.

Ana: My mum and dad they say 'try to pass SC'.

Donna: — and 'work hard at school'.

Despite their 'hard work' at school most of the 5 Mason girls — in keeping with the prevailing pattern of Pacific Island students' school achievement in New Zealand — did relatively poorly at school.⁸ None of the 5 Mason girls achieved the occupations they hoped for, and those who got work on leaving school ended up on the sorts of 'dead-end' jobs which characterize the employment of Pacific Island workers in New Zealand, but which they had wanted to avoid (Jones, 1987a, pp. 526ff).

Treasury's Educational Policy

One of the points used by its proponents in favour of the new administrative structure for schools is its supposed benefits for 'disadvantaged' groups. This argument, amongst others, is contained in a major Treasury 'brief' on education published in 1987.⁹ While the recent initiatives in education are most publicly outlined in *Administering for Excellence* and the government's subsequent policy statement on educational administration, *Tomorrow's Schools*, some of the philosophy underlying these publications is to be found in the Treasury document (see Codd *et al.*, 1985).

As part of their New Right programme of economic and social change towards a more free market economy and the concomitant reduction of direct government responsibility for social services in New Zealand, the Treasury authors argue against the existing form of state provision of education — a universal system which has been developed in this country over the last sixty years largely in the context of widespread arguments for egalitarianism and equality of educational opportunity.

Much of the Treasury rhetoric is built around the fact that 'equity' goals have not been achieved, despite increased state spending on education. Citing statistics on educational outcomes, Treasury authors attack state provision of education in New Zealand by arguing that educational inequalities are not decreased by state intervention in schooling (1987a, p. 140). Their 'solution'? Put control of schooling into the hands of its consumers: 'parents, students and employers', with the state pulling out of its current role of providing and administering the national education system.

The Treasury authors maintain (without any evidence) that a decentralized system will lead to 'equity' and improve the situation for the 'disadvantaged'. They point out that 'disadvantaged' families currently have little control over educational provision for their children unlike 'privileged groups' who 'constantly seek to maintain their privilege' via schooling (*ibid.*). They argue that it is due to centralized control of education that disadvantaged families *are* disadvantaged because they rely on the state to make educational decisions and have little or no say in their children's education. Thus, these

families' potential initiative (i.e. access to their own bootstraps) is not utilized: '... By capturing virtually all available state intervention for itself, the institutional sector is ensuring that the potential of the family resource is not fully realized, particularly among the disadvantaged' (1987a, p. 139; 1987b, p. 114).

Not only does this 'disadvantage' penalize already disadvantaged families, but it is also economically inefficient; through taxation which supports state bureaucracies such as the Education Department, the state is engaged in 'removing monies from families so that the government can spend it largely on their behalf' (1987a, p. 137).

If the state bureaucracy which currently controls education in New Zealand were dismantled, the argument goes, and 'disadvantaged' as well as 'privileged' parents had direct control over their local school, or choice over which school their children could attend, it would 'be easier (for families) to exert greater pressure on schools to reach the high standards that families want' (1987a, p. 138). In this way, the 'school system (will) enable the disadvantaged'; 'empower the consumer' (1987b, p. 42), and give 'greater power ... by (sic) students, parents and employers in decision-making at institutional levels' (*ibid.*). This will lead to an equitable and more cost efficient educational system.

There are a host of inconsistencies, contradictions and spurious assumptions in this argument, many of which have been exposed by educationists (for example, Lauder 1987; Gordon, 1988; *Access*, 1988). The New Zealand secondary teachers' union, the Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA), has pointed to the real problems which decentralization is likely to create in terms of regional differences, 'poor' schools, reduced choice for 'disadvantaged' groups, increased 'middle-class capture of resources' and so on; in short, 'an increase in inequalities ... based on gender, race, geography, and wealth', and a return to the pre-1930s education system characterized by massive disparities.¹⁰

None of these critics would assert that the about-to-be usurped centralized state system has been equally beneficial for all. As radical educationists Codd, Harker and Nash stated about New Zealand education in 1985: 'Most academic analysis of recent years has exposed inequalities of educational access and outcome. It has recognized moreover that the bureaucratic power of the state keeps the system functioning' (p. 9). Within the academic literature it has been widely argued that the now-familiar patterns of school achievement, which differ along race, gender and class lines, simply reflect the school's function of reproducing the supply of skills, attitudes and knowledge, as well as the social differentiation and inequality demanded by a capitalist economy and patriarchal society.

Such critical educationists in New Zealand and elsewhere have called on schools to serve not the needs of an oppressive social and economic order, but to serve the interests of people themselves — particularly disadvantaged race, gender and class groups. This, it is argued, must occur through an

education system which attacks structurally determined inequalities and oppression, and which begins with and responds to the needs and concerns of these groups.

As I have noted, on the face of it, the Treasury arguments about 'empowering' families and 'enabling parents ... to make ... choices and contributions' (1987a, p. 138) to the development and control of education might appear to be a move in such a 'democratic' direction. There is some superficial similarity between this call to 'empower' families in educational decision-making and the suggestions by critical educationists that schools have to provide programmes based on client interests.

But, in fact, there is no congruence between educationists' suggestions and Treasury's decentralized family-controlled school system which appears in a modified form in the government's restructuring of school administration. The major and crucial difference between radical calls for subordinate group access to education, and Treasury calls for parental 'control and choice', is that the Treasury authors choose not to address the fundamental issue of structural power. The Treasury document on education is based on a contested (and erroneous) liberal political assumption, taken from Adam Smith, about the nature of the capitalist social order as made up of 'free-floating' individuals. This assumption is most succinctly spelled out in the Treasury authors' summary of their case against the current form of government control of public education:

In sum, government intervention (in education) is liable to reduce freedom of choice and thereby curtail the sphere of responsibility of its citizens and weaken the *self-steering ability inherent in society to reach optimal solutions* through the mass of individual actions pursuing free choice without formal consensus. (1987b, p. 42, my emphasis)

This position, in its avoidance of any structural analysis, attempts to divert attention from the fact that New Zealand 'society' is structured by a capitalist economy which is *constituted* by unequal class, race and gender relations and has been since before 1840. The authors seem to want us to believe that if groups of people are left alone to administer their affairs they will reach 'optimal solutions', presumably 'optimal' for all groups. This stands in contradiction with the vast body of scholarly research and argument which shows that, without intervention, the most powerful groups are invariably enabled to reproduce a situation which benefits them. This might be optimal for dominant groups, but hardly for anyone else whose interests do not coincide.

In the educational sphere, a widely documented aspect of those power relations is that the children of subordinate group families, like those of the 5 Mason girls, benefit less from schooling than do the children of privileged groups. All available New Zealand research shows this relationship between social class (or socioeconomic status) — and race — and level of educational achievement (for example, Lauder, 1985; Nash, 1986; Vellekoop, 1977). The

Treasury authors suggest that this inequity can be remedied by 'empowering' the parents to put pressure on schools so that their children *do* benefit.

The argument that direct parental or family 'control' of education will lead to a reduction in disadvantage can easily be seen to be misguided when some basic matters are taken into account. First, even if families are 'empowered' to make decisions about schooling, this is highly unlikely to have any beneficial outcomes in terms of educational and economic opportunities for disadvantaged families. The objective possibilities for educational and labour market 'achievement' are strictly limited. As Nash (1986) succinctly points out: 'Educational qualifications are awarded to a percentage of candidates and the labour market offers only so many positions . . . this given distribution of positions constitutes "opportunities"' (p. 91). Clearly no amount of access to decision-making in schools is going to improve the employment and educational situation for school leavers when there are simply not enough jobs and only a certain number of As or exam passes available. Needless to say, the school leavers who end up with few qualifications, and unemployed or in low-paid, dead-end jobs are more likely to be working class, and particularly Maori and Pacific Polynesian; those working class young women such as the 5 Mason girls who do find work have to take up those jobs with few prospects which are available to them — such as junior clerical, shop assistant and housemaid work.

'Empowering' families to make educational decisions within this structural context becomes an exercise in utter futility for those who, due to the objective availability of particular forms of work, must be unemployed or in what the girls call 'stink jobs'. Indeed, it does not *make sense* to suggest that decentralizing educational administration can provide 'opportunities' and decrease 'disadvantage' — which is certainly what Treasury seems to be suggesting.

Second, not only will increased parental access to educational decision-making fail to improve their children's 'chances', but also paradoxically it may lead to the 'disadvantaged' having *less* control of education. It seems likely that in the present unstable and limited job market in New Zealand, parents such as those of the 5 Mason girls' anxious about their children's future prospects, could reasonably assume that employers and managers know which educational programmes will lead to jobs, and to look to them for guidance in such decisions as funding priorities for school resources. A probable outcome of giving 'students, parents and employers' power in educational and administrative decisions could be that the business-school relationship will intensify, giving employers even greater control over schooling, and encouraging the further development of market culture in education.

This likelihood is increased as the government engages in pamphlet, radio and television advertizing campaigns which urge students to return to school on the grounds that more schooling leads to more job opportunities.¹¹ This campaign endorses and reproduces the already

existing dominant ideology regarding the 'educational exchange' to which — as we have seen — the 5 Mason girls adhere. This ideology forms the basis not only of the girls' misguided belief that job opportunities are almost 'created' by credentials, but it also provides a possible justification for them and their parents 'choosing' to facilitate employer-guided educational decision-making in a decentralized system.

In other words, the effect of devolving power to people within a situation clearly dominated by an ideological position such as that reflected in the government's 'give school another go' campaign, is to make them even more directly and intensively complicit in their own subordination. It amounts to an invitation to people to consent to increased educational control by a group (i.e. employers and managers) who — understandably — favour a highly selective and work skills-based education system.¹² In this situation working class people as a group will simply find themselves still at the 'bottom' of an even more differentiated school system, receiving a narrower and more rigidly defined curriculum. Furthermore, this situation would be *legitimated* by their 'participatory' consent. As has been argued by many writers since Gramsci, non-violent social control by dominant groups in any society is based on such consent.

Another crucial — and incorrect — assumption in the Treasury's argument is that state intervention in education cannot be justified on egalitarian grounds — that state provision and control cannot decrease disadvantage. Unfortunately, because radical accounts of education have focused on the reproductive aspects of schooling, they have unwittingly provided ammunition for such arguments. Indeed, it has been argued that it is the pessimism of radical educational critics which has allowed public educational debate to be effectively dominated by conservative arguments in New Zealand, as well as the United States and Britain (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1986). Recognizing this, some radical commentators in education have turned to those aspects of state-provided education which *can* be more just, and which can contribute to the development of a more egalitarian and genuinely democratic society.¹³ In other words, if state controlled education *has not* been egalitarian and progressive, it does not follow that it *cannot* be. Even if the 'bureaucratic power of the state' does keep an inequitable education system going, as Codd *et al.* (1985) put it, it is not the case that the state *has* to keep it going in this way. Even given the external limitations we do not *know* the potential of the state system. In their comprehensive examination of the apparent failure of official attempts to promote greater equality in the British education system, Lodge and Blackstone (1982) conclude that it is incorrect to argue that 'egalitarian policies' have failed in education. Rather, they say, the essential fact of twentieth century educational history in Britain 'is that egalitarian policies have not been devised and rigorously implemented' (p. 133). The situation in New Zealand may be similar.

Ultimately it is not the form of educational administration which will

determine educational outcomes, but the form of society. Given the difficulty of finding rapid solutions to current unemployment levels and oppressive forms of work, and recognizing the limitations of expecting schooling to solve the structural problems of inequality, we must work out which administrative and decision-making organization in schools holds the most beneficial potential for 'disadvantaged' groups. In that the Treasury proposals are likely to exacerbate the already inequitable situation they must be exposed as such: it is simply misleading to speak (as Treasury does) about an education system advantaging people through their participation, without a programme for social structural change towards a more just distribution of material and symbolic resources (for example, jobs and knowledge) – or without a programme for enabling groups in the population to become more knowledgeable about their collective situation. Otherwise, when local families are enabled to administer formal education, it is highly likely that because of those very aspects which define their respective 'disadvantage' and privilege – that is, differential access to knowledge and other resources – they will simply be 'empowered' to reproduce their existing situation.

Postscript

In March 1989 the Department of Education circulated to all schools the draft school charter framework. The school charter will become a legal agreement between each school's administrative group (Board of Trustees) and the Minister of Education. It includes a statement of 'the school's paramount purpose, guiding principles, the broad goals and objectives of the school'. While each school can provide a small portion of these principles and goals, the major framework is set by the Department (or, in the future, the new Ministry of Education). This draft framework includes such statements as

- 5.1 *Treaty of Waitangi*: The Board of Trustees accepts obligation to develop policies which are consistent with the spirit of partnership in the Treaty of Waitangi; . . .
- 5.4 *Equal Educational Opportunity*: The Board of Trustees . . . will have regard to the school's curriculum (which) . . . will include programmes that redress existing inequities and address the current and future needs of students, particularly gender issues, Maori, Pacific Islanders, other ethnic groups, students with disabilities, students with special needs (p. 4).

Such statements represent a significant shift away from the Treasury's original intentions of laissez faire consumer control of schooling, towards state intervention in the interests of 'disadvantaged' groups. Indeed, the development of educational policy since the publication of the Treasury document (when this article was first written) has been marked by a struggle

between the New Right ideal of 'free market' in education and the liberal stress on the need for state intervention to attempt to achieve 'equality of educational opportunity'. This struggle goes on. As this book goes to press there is public debate over the content of the draft charters and their interventionist intent. While some see the draft charters as an example of the government interference they thought they could escape with local administrative control, others recognize that the charters' egalitarian thrust is necessary to guard against the entrenchment of conservative influences in education. At a time of rapidly diminishing support for the Labour government, the draft charters might be seen as an attempt by the government to placate its disaffected middle class liberal constituency which opposes the ideology of the right but has traditionally supported the past Labour governments' progressive social policies.

Notes

- 1 Despite the rhetoric, under the new structure the 'control' of schools rests largely in the hands of the new Ministry of Education which, among other things, sets the national guidelines for school charters (the schools' 'operational goals and objectives'), carries out regular reviews and audits of schools' educational and economic practice, provides curriculum parameters and can remove governing Boards of Trustees.
- 2 Pacific Island here refers to Samoa, Niue, Tonga, Tokelau and Rarotonga. Most of these girls were born in New Zealand of immigrant parents.
- 3 Students enter the fifth form in the third year of their secondary schooling, aged about 15. At the end of this year they sit School Certificate examinations (equivalent to 'O' levels).
- 4 See, for example, studies of boys' schools by Lacey (1970), Woods (1979), Willis (1977), Ball (1981), Corrigan (1979). Research on working class girls by McRobbie (1978), Thomas (1980), Moran (1983) indicates similar (though differently expressed) patterns of female working class alienation from school, although research by Brown (1987) points out that many (most?) working class 'kids' are not anti-school.
- 5 A British study by Fuller (1980) shows that many West Indian girls' experiences and expectations are similar to those of the 5 Mason girls.
- 6 'The New Zealand Labour Force', September 1987 Quarter, Department of Statistics, Wellington.
- 7 Pay the examination fees.
- 8 Although twelve girls sat four or five School Certificate papers, only two passed all their papers. Most had no passes. The few data available on Pacific Island educational achievement in New Zealand indicate relatively 'poor' achievement patterns compared with non-Polynesian children (Jones, 1987b).
- 9 The Treasury *Government Management: Brief to the Incoming Government*, Vol. 1 (1987a), Vol. 2 Educational Issues (1987b), Wellington.
- 10 Post Primary Teachers' Association, memo to Executive, 'The Treasury Brief - A Summary', 5 February 1988. See also *Access*, Vol. 7 (1988), also Gordon (1988).
- 11 The government's campaign to get school leavers to 'give school another go'

includes statements such as 'getting all you can out of the school system this year offers a better future than the dole.' These phrases and others consistently imply that job opportunities arise as a result of effort at school.

- 12 See, for example, New Zealand Employers Federation (1981).
- 13 Educationists working in the Third World such as Freire (see Shor and Freire, (1987) and Kozol (1978) have not doubted the revolutionary potential of schooling, and their work reflects this focus. See also Shor (1980) for critical teaching in North American schools.

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Notes on the Schooling of the English Working Class: What Lessons for New Zealand? A Comparative Briefing Paper¹

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Introduction

It has been rightly pointed out that there are dangers for New Zealand policy-makers in relying too heavily upon American and British experience. The argument is that New Zealand faces the challenge of developing its own distinctive culture, policies and institutions derived from the experiences of Pakeha, Maori and Pacific Island communities and of other ethnic groups in New Zealand society. The validity and power of this argument should not lead us to imply, however, that nothing of value can be learned from the study of education in other societies. To do so would be to replace a Western ethnocentrism with a Pacific ethnocentrism. Comparative study in education, provided that it is sensitive to historical and cultural differences, can be a useful resource for educational policy-makers. Useful lessons may be learned from the historical and cultural experiences of other societies.

New Zealand has a different historical experience from that of England and it has a different set of power relations expressed in its class structure, and in its race and gender relations.² These are the specificities of New Zealand society which collectively give it a distinctive culture. Nevertheless, as in England, there are class, race and gender relations and these are expressed, among other ways, in differentials of power and control, wealth and conventionally designated 'success' in a range of institutional settings.³ In liberal policy terms this situation is described and spoken of in public discourse as 'lack of equity' or 'lack of fairness' in society. The Royal Commission on Social Policy is premised upon a liberal policy principle of increasing equity and fairness in various social policy areas including education.⁴ One of its concerns is to try to remove existing impediments

to worthwhile and 'successful' schooling for working class communities of various ethnic backgrounds.

My hope in presenting these 'notes' is that some useful lessons related to this policy concern may be derived from an examination of the history and sociology of working class schooling in England even in the constrained form of a briefing paper. While there are substantial differences in the two cases, there are at the same time many interesting parallels in both the nature of state provision of schooling and in the nature of working class response to it. An attempt will be made to clarify some of the fundamental principles, procedures and relations of English working class schooling as they have existed historically. From this analysis some possible implications for New Zealand education policy in the 1980s will be derived. It is for New Zealand policy-makers and others to decide whether or not these implications have situational validity⁵.

Reading History: Class and Schooling Oppositions

History never speaks for itself; it is always read and interpreted within some world view or theoretical framework, implicit or explicit. This theoretical framework may be imposed *a priori* as in some types of grand theory or it may be derived from a critical analytical study of a research field.

It is argued here that a critical reading of working class schooling in England suggests the analytical usefulness of the concept of *schooling oppositions*.⁶ When viewed in a sociohistorical perspective, working class schooling in England can be seen to be characterized by a series of oppositions at the level of structures and provision, of teachers, of educational process and of teacher-pupil relations in classrooms. Working class schooling in England has been a site for struggle between two different conceptions of what education is for and how it should be conducted. One educational agenda has originated from various sectors of the working class itself. The other has originated from the providing authorities of church and state. The distinction may be summed up, at the risk of oversimplification, as that between popular education (which retains a close and organic connection with the working class) and unpopular education (which is provided for the working class).⁷ The principles, procedures and assumptions of these two conceptions of education were at variance from the beginning of the nineteenth century and in a situation of struggle and opposition. It was an unequal struggle. Popular education, as understood here, depended upon the material and cultural resources of a class which was vulnerable to changing economic and political pressures. Unpopular education could call upon progressively increasing resources and powerful ideological support from church and state agencies. By the early twentieth century a popular education network as an expression of cultural opposition to provided schooling had

almost disappeared although an independent provision for working class adults still existed. What did *not* disappear in the twentieth century was schooling opposition expressed in direct classroom terms within formal schooling. By a variety of strategies, working class youth opposed provided schooling and resisted its formal objectives. Despite progressive reforms in the system in the twentieth century which had changed structure and access, curriculum and pedagogy, school organization and teacher education, sectors of working class youth remained in opposition to it. They expressed this opposition by failing its formal tests, disrupting its institutional processes, refusing its compulsory attendance and resisting its teachers' intentions for them. In doing so they helped to constitute the 'working class problem in education' which preoccupied twentieth century sociologists and policy-makers, just as the working class problem in schooling preoccupied moralists and politicians in the nineteenth century.

It becomes apparent from this analysis that if contemporary social and education policy is concerned to establish 'greater equity' in the education process, then it must address the nature of schooling oppositions. It also becomes apparent that a serious understanding of these can only be derived from examining both their historical roots and their contemporary manifestations. Contemporary policy discussion dismisses history at its peril. The surface structure of contemporary social and educational problems is constituted and patterned by the deep structure of historical principles and of historical struggles.⁸

If schooling oppositions are to be resolved in some form of synthesis, then at least a sense of their history must be appreciated as a first step to understanding their contemporary forms.

When working class schooling in England is examined from the perspective suggested above, it is possible to discern in both its history and in its contemporary practice the existence of schooling oppositions at four levels:

- in the establishment and development of educational structures and provision;
- in the selecting, forming and education of teachers;
- in the shaping of the process of education;
- in the nature of teacher-pupil relations in classrooms.

The substantive nature of some of these oppositions has changed from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century but despite this the fundamental principles of opposition have survived into the twentieth century although transmuted into modern forms and expressions. It is these principles of opposition which help to constitute the modern form of the 'working class problem in education'.

In the space available here only a schematic outline can be given to suggest at least a sense of the history and sociology of these oppositions.

The Establishment and Development of Educational Structures and Provision

Conventional educational history often represents the provision of schooling for the working class in England as provision for a class which was devoid of its own cultural and educational agencies. This deficit model of working class life was the ideological creation of those, who for their own reasons, wanted to extend the hegemony of church and state provided schooling over that class.⁹ Recent scholarship has shown that forms of popular education existed among the English working class, not as a system but as 'a series of educational networks'. Throughout the nineteenth century these educational networks took many forms: local 'teachers' in the community; workplace reading and discussion groups; Chartist Halls of Learning; working class community 'schools'; secular Sunday schools and the educational activity of a radical popular press. In short, there was an independent working class educational provision which, although fragmentary and variable over time, was in an organic relation with the working class and at its disposal.¹⁰ This educational provision involved both a conception of adult education and a conception of child education and it was premised upon a deep scepticism about the purposes of church and state provided schooling. William Lovett, the Chartist leader, insisted that the working class must provide its own educational institutions if it hoped to advance its own interests in society.¹¹

Church and state provided schooling for the working class in England was, in part, constructed and developed in opposition to the existence of an independent working class educational network. While governmental reports commented upon the 'inefficiency' of these networks, it can be argued that there was much official concern about the independence of mind which such networks could produce. The agencies of working class communities had the potential to provide an education which was socially, economically and politically located and in a stance of criticism of the existing social order.

The agencies of church and state were concerned to provide a schooling experience which would be functional to the existing social order. It was necessary to that purpose that the educative potential of working class community and of working class networks should be excluded from the schooling process. By a series of legislative measures they came to be excluded from the schooling process, and the very architecture of church and state elementary schools with their high surrounding walls symbolized that exclusion. By the end of the nineteenth century unpopular education had largely triumphed over popular education. The schooling of working class children was almost entirely conducted by the agencies of church and state.

Adult education, which in many ways had been a stronger feature of the working class network, continued in opposition to provided forms until as late as the 1960s but even here state and official provision came to dominate the field.¹²

The structure and provision of English working class schooling were therefore formed and shaped in opposition to, rather than in alliance with, the educational networks of working class community. A powerful principle of exclusion and separation formed in the nineteenth century has extended its influence deep into the practice of twentieth century schooling. Working class community has been kept at arm's length from the schooling process in England, and this process of distancing is central to the contemporary problem of working class educational underachievement and alienation from the school.¹³

Selecting, Forming and Educating the Teachers

A similar principle of exclusion and separation has characterized the provision of teachers for working class schooling in England. The educational networks of the working class were serviced by 'teachers' derived from various backgrounds in the working community; those having particular skills of production, those having skills of literacy and numeracy and those having an informed consciousness of social, economic and political affairs. The 'teachers' operated in a variety of settings, sometimes as paid workers and sometimes as a form of unpaid community service. Their level of skill, knowledge and competence varied but some of them could be described as organic intellectuals of the working class.¹⁴ They were known to the local community and were of the local community. Few of them had any formal training but they frequently had the confidence of the local population. They were, in a very real sense, *teachers from the people*. From an official standpoint these teachers were perceived to be unsatisfactory. They had not undergone any process of training as to forms of correct culture, religion, morality and disciplinary relations. They were seen, in some cases, to be involved in the transmission of dangerous knowledge rather than of edifying knowledge to the working class. Their very existence placed them outside the surveillance of church and state agencies.

The provision of church and state schooling on a large scale for the working class crystallized the need for an occupational group suitably selected and trained to become the agents of the provided system. In this way the category of teachers of the people came into existence. The '*teachers of the people*' were the crucial agents for the success of church and state provided schooling and for the success of its objectives.¹⁵ The social conventions of the time required that teachers for working class schools would be largely recruited from the working class itself but a careful ideological screening process ensured that they originated from the 'respectable' sector of that class and that they possessed the necessary moral and religious qualities. The training process itself was designed to *distance* the teachers from their class of origin. The experience of the teacher training colleges was one of cultural transformation and of personal monitoring and surveillance. The students

were presented with a view of working class life characterized in deficit terms and they were encouraged to see their role as that of social and cultural missionary to a class in a state of barbarism. Trained teaching in working class schools was represented as a work of cultural, moral, and religious salvation,¹⁶ that is, it was premised upon an ethic of the 'rescue' of the (deserving) individual from his/her class location.

In the training of teachers for working class schools in England the missionary ideology and the ethic of rescue remained powerful until well into the twentieth century. In the separated seminaries of the teacher colleges such principles could be reproduced with little alteration or questioning.

The social effect of the training process was therefore to place the teacher at a distance from working class community and in a rescue relation towards it, rather than an organic relation.

As the teachers of the people became more consciously an occupational group in the twentieth century they sought to consolidate their separate identity as educators in the concept of a profession. A new professional ideology forged in struggles to improve their own pay and working conditions had the effect of adding yet further to their distance from working class community. The process of professionalization emphasized differences between 'professionals' and 'workers'; began to change the social class basis of the occupational group, making it more middle class in composition and outlook, and above all attempted to make the teaching role an exclusive function which could only be performed after extensive professional preparation. By the twentieth century the professional teachers of the people had come to regard any suggestion that their activities might be complemented by 'teachers' from the people as subversive both of educational objectives and of their own professional status and position.¹⁷

A principle of opposition to any other category of 'teacher' was now firmly entrenched. It can be argued that this principle is also implicated in the contemporary working class problem in education.

Shaping the Process of Education

The concept of popular education is premised on the notion that what the working class wanted was 'really useful knowledge'. As Johnson (1979) has argued, really useful knowledge was understood to be that which was practical and related to 'our condition in life', that which explained political, social and economic issues and that which was focussed on 'how to get out of our present troubles'. Radical educators within the working class argued in journals such as *The Cooperator*, *The Pioneer* and *The Poor Man's Guardian* that the process of education and the knowledge and skills acquired should be relevant to the experienced problems of working class life. The issue of relevance was understood broadly as relating to the conditions of the workplace; relating to the wider structural conditions of the working class

in English society; and also relating to the formulation of plans for action and strategies for change. In short, the concept of really useful knowledge which existed within radical education networks sought to overcome conventional distinctions between practical and theoretical education and between analysis and action. Literacy was to be related to a greater understanding of the social, economic and political conditions of society in order to change these conditions for the benefit of the working class. The education provided for the working class through the agencies of church and state was of a different kind. In the nineteenth century the central concerns of provided schooling were to establish principles of hierarchy and respect, morality and religious disposition, discipline and order and knowledge and skills functional to a known destination in the workforce and in the social structure.

Provided schooling was a major attempt at the cultural transformation of a whole class. The working classes in nineteenth century English society were regarded by the middle and upper classes as a category of alien beings, almost another 'race' of people who were in urgent need of civilization.¹⁸ The civilization of this class required that its members were culturally uplifted and refined according to an approved cultural model, while at the same time they were disciplined and shaped to an appropriate social type.

Progressive reforms in twentieth century educational process modified many of these earlier principles of class-cultural transformation. Twentieth century working class schooling became more humane, more comprehensive and in its assumptions and practice more liberal and flexible. However, for all this change in the direction of greater openness it is possible to argue that the nineteenth century principles of 'civilization' and 'rescue' found new expression in modern conditions.

The type of education provided for working class pupils, especially at secondary school, continued to be informed by a notion of civilization now expressed as a concept of liberal education. The liberal, academic, bookish education provided by twentieth century working class schooling was designed by professional teachers with the best intentions. Its purpose was to bring a rich cultural capital formerly only available to privileged classes on to the curriculum of working class pupils.¹⁹ What the liberal educators failed to realize was that this cultural capital needed to be brought into a living relation with the conditions of working class life and into a relation with the aspirations of working class pupils. In other words it had to be rendered into some form of 'really useful knowledge' rather than merely being experienced as a process of civilization. If it was experienced as the receiving of an abstract 'high culture', then for sectors of working class pupils it would be an alien experience and one to be resisted.

If the *process of civilization* has lived on in new forms, so too has the *process of rescue*. Modern schooling in adopting the principle of equal educational opportunity for individuals and its associated principle of social advancement and social mobility for individuals had transmuted into a modern form the

nineteenth century ethic of rescue. Modern secondary schools in England came to represent a principle that individuals could be rescued from the working class and from their class destiny by success in education. This 'success' would be demonstrated by success in examinations. A strong emphasis upon individual competitive achievement as witnessed by examination credentials came to dominate the culture of modern secondary schools. The principles of this culture were fundamentally in opposition to traditional working class values of group solidarity and of community effort. Those among working class youth who identified with such values, against those of individual competitive achievement, were therefore in a situation of opposition to the dominant culture of provided schooling. For those young people a sense of alienation from the purposes of schooling would grow sharper with each year of their secondary schooling.

In one sense, therefore, it is possible to see a sector of English working class youth resisting the modern forms of the transmission of civilization and of the ethic of individual rescue; resisting because they do not accept the underlying principles and values; and resisting because they find the whole process personally demeaning.²⁰

The Nature of Teacher-pupil Relations in Classrooms

The schooling oppositions at the level of structure, teaching and process are ultimately expressed in the conflict of teacher-pupil relations in classrooms, especially in secondary schools. The secondary school classroom is the visible and immediate site of struggle for contradictory principles and actions which have their location in wider sociocultural and political settings. The secondary school teacher in facing a sector of 'disruptive', 'uncooperative' and 'underachieving' youth is not, despite appearances, facing only a problem of the immediate present but rather is facing a *historically structured and socially structured long war of cultural oppositions*. For the superficial critic of modern schooling it is easy to point to the surface structure of the schooling problem and to blame the incompetence of the teachers on the one hand or the failings of modern youth on the other.²¹

To the thoughtful critic of modern schooling it becomes apparent that the visible conflicts of the classroom are in large part the working out of the deep structured principles of cultural opposition established in the nineteenth century. As in the nineteenth century, different sectors of working class youth respond to these principles in different ways. Some are *attracted* to the principles of provided schooling and become its best pupils, its committed students. What the school offers, and the mode in which it offers a schooling experience, articulates well with their aspirations. These working class students become the 'school successes' and a not insignificant number of them have historically gone on to become school teachers. They are in

some senses the 'elect' of the cultural process. They have been personally rescued from their class destiny through the operation of the schooling process and they may well return to the classroom with this mission for others.²² A second sector, the *pragmatists*, respond to the principles of provided schooling in a utilitarian manner. They take from the system what seems useful for their life plans and for their individual purposes. These working class students have an instrumental orientation to the secondary school. They take those parts of the provided cultural capital which they can usefully bank for the future. Characteristically they do not show commitment to the wider cultural or social purposes of the school or to any deeper process of class-cultural transformation. They give functional assent to the schooling process but their stance remains one of preserving personal and cultural and often group integrity within the system.

Although there are important qualitative differences in the responses and actions of the 'culturally elect' and the 'culturally pragmatic' sectors of working class youth in England, both groups are ultimately cooperators in the schooling process. They do not constitute what is understood as the working class problem in education.

The 'problem' is constituted by the sectors which resist the schooling process. The culture of resistance in secondary schooling has both a passive and an active dimension. The *'passive resisters'* are those who find the schooling process so far removed from their life experiences and their life aspirations and their social and cultural symbols that it is perceived as an alien cultural game in which they have very little interest. Individual, dynamic teachers may enliven the experience of the game from time to time but the basic principles of the game remain alien and distant. The response to this situation is characteristically to find another more attractive and lively cultural game which relates more immediately to personal and group interests. It is no coincidence to find in research studies that the passive resisters consist very largely of adolescent working class young women who find in the 'culture of femininity' an escape from a schooling game which does not seem to relate to them.²³ The cultural game of modern secondary schooling has not been prepared to change its rules and procedures sufficiently to bring them into rapport with the personal and social concerns of mature young women.²⁴ The response of these young women has been to construct another world of meaning. The visible outcome of this has been the 'underachievement' of many young working class women in the formal schooling process.²⁵ The *active resisters* are well known. A considerable literature documents the resistance of a sector of male working class youth to processes of class-cultural transformation. Such resistance has a long history. A vigorous culture of resistance existed in nineteenth century England and in the early twentieth century which could express itself in direct physical attacks upon teachers or in the organization of 'school strikes'.²⁶ A historical and a contemporary description of resistance to the schooling process can be found by reference to Humphries (1981), Willis (1977) and Corrigan (1979). This category of

working class male resistance to the schooling process has by some been denounced as 'mindless anarchism' and by others romanticized in the concept of 'working class heroes'. As both Willis (1983) and Furlong (1985) have pointed out such deviance is neither anarchism nor heroism; it is a form of cultural production.

A counter-culture is being constructed over and against the dominant culture of the secondary school. The counter-culture celebrates male group solidarity against the individualistic ethic of the school and it celebrates practical toughness against what is perceived as the domestication of book work. The counter-culture and its members refuse to enter into a social contract with the school in which respect is given in exchange for knowledge and skill. The 'deal' is rejected because the knowledge and the skill are to a large extent perceived to be *not* 'really useful' to the world of labour which the lads have before their eyes. This counter-culture inverts the principles of school culture and finds in individual failure an evidence of success. It 'underachieves' to assert its own sense of cultural validity.

Implications for Education Policy: Working Class Education; Unifying the Oppositions

If the foregoing analysis is accepted, then it can be seen that schooling oppositions inherited from the nineteenth century have, even though transmuted into modern forms, continued to produce a deep structure of oppositions which has impeded working class education in England. One way forward would be to attempt to unify those historical oppositions in a new educational synthesis. In brief this would involve, as a start, a synthesis at the level of structure and provision. The educational networks of workplace and community do not have to remain at a distance from the institutions of provided schooling. The state as the crucial and necessary agent for the provision of public education could find ways to facilitate and support a complementary relation between the two educational enterprises. Workplace and community are rich sources of education. They no longer need to be seen as the 'enemy' of institutional schooling.

Such a change would have profound consequences for school teachers in England. As teachers of the people, as professional teachers, they have pursued a long struggle to ensure that the complex nature of the science and art of teaching is fully recognized, properly prepared for and adequately rewarded. *No project to bring community and school into a closer relation can ever work unless the special position of the professional teacher is recognized and safeguarded.* Only from a position of professional security and confidence can the teachers of the people be brought into a fruitful relation with 'teachers' from the people.²⁷ 'Teachers' from the community could do much to transform the dominant culture of the secondary school, to remove its isolation and sense of cultural distance. The long historical opposition between 'really useful

knowledge' and the academic curriculum of the secondary school could be overcome in the development of a comprehensive knowledge code and educational experience for all.²⁸ Such a development seems likely to be an outcome of dialogue and cooperation between professional teachers and community teachers, and between both of these and senior school students of all types.

At the same time new approaches to teaching and learning which give more emphasis to group and collective projects in education seem to be a way out of a present schooling culture which causes culture resistance and the formation of counter-cultures.²⁹ By overcoming schooling oppositions in these ways, educational policy initiatives could at last break free from some of the contradictions of the past. Change in education alone cannot solve the deeper social, economic and political relations of society which constitute the existence of a working class in the first instance. However, a transformation of the principles and practices of education in the directions indicated would have its role to play in the generation of wider transformations.

Implications for Education Policy: The New Zealand Situation

This chapter has been written from a perspective of English class relations and of English schooling arrangements. Nevertheless I see in this analysis many points of similarity to, and of relevance for, the New Zealand situation. The experience of both a Maori working class and of a Pakeha working class can be subsumed within at least the general principles of the analysis if not within its substantive content. New Zealand society stands at a critical historical juncture. Educational decisions for the reform and restructuring of the schooling system have the potential to give a fuller expression to the liberal principle of social equity. Insofar as New Zealand schooling has been characterized by schooling oppositions of the kind referred to in this chapter, then a policy of attempted unification of the oppositions would seem appropriate. This would have to involve bringing the educational networks of New Zealand communities (defined in both class and ethnic terms) into an organic relation with provided schooling. Specifically, it would involve a greater degree of community involvement in school life and the careful negotiation of a new relation between communities and their 'teachers' and the school and its professional teachers. Within the schools themselves a curriculum form which unifies 'really useful knowledge' and a liberal education for all citizens with a recognition of the political and cultural significance of the Treaty of Waitangi is the central challenge to community educators and to professional educators. In short, as in England, a policy strategy is required which gives expression to political, cultural and social partnership in the shaping of educational experience rather than one which has historically proceeded by imposition.

Notes

- 1 This chapter was presented as a paper to the Royal Commission on Social Policy. It has been influenced by Johnson's (1976) analysis, 'Notes on the schooling of the English working class 1780-1850'. The use of the term 'notes' in both cases indicates that the treatment of issues had had to be compressed, that is, that some of the normal conventions and elaborations of academic scholarship are not present because of constraints of space.
This chapter differs from Johnson's in that it attempts a wider sweep both of key issues and of time span. This was required for the purposes of the Royal Commission Conference 'Towards Successful Schooling'.
- 2 For recent studies of class structure and of race and gender relations in New Zealand see Wilkes *et al.* (1987), Middleton (1988) and Spoonley (1988).
- 3 The problematic nature of concepts of 'success' in public discourse must be recognized. Conventional or dominant understandings of 'success' may conflict sharply with understandings held by certain classes, communities, ethnic groups and oppositional groups in society.
- 4 The principles of equity and fairness as used in the Royal Commission's enquiry are formally stated in Volume 1, *New Zealand Today*, pp. v-vii.
- 5 Situational validity, that is the extent to which certain policy implications derived from one sociopolitical context can be applied in another, must always be carefully examined by those who have appropriate historical and cultural knowledge of local conditions.
- 6 The concept of 'schooling oppositions' is developed from the writings of Raymond Williams. Schooling oppositions are taken to be educational situations characterized by alternative principles of structure, process and curriculum, that is, situations in which there are radically conflicting educational agenda.
Williams (1980) expresses a wider conception of oppositional culture in this way: 'those practices, experiences, meanings and values which are not part of the effective dominant culture . . . There is clearly something that we can call alternative to the effective dominant culture and there is something else that we can call oppositional in a true sense. The degree of existence of these alternative and oppositional forms is itself a matter of constant historical variation in real circumstances'. (p. 40)
- 7 The concept of 'unpopular education' is taken from Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (1981) *Unpopular Education: Schooling and Social Democracy in England Since 1944*, London, Hutchinson.
- 8 The danger for policy-makers of ignoring history is that analysis of policy issues becomes literally superficial and key elements in the situation are missed out. The attempt to construct a modern 'policy science' separated from history is misconceived. See Fay (1975). See also Grace (1984) 'Urban education: Policy science or critical scholarship?' in Grace (1984).
- 9 The work of Richard Johnson and others at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, has been important in establishing this position.
- 10 Johnson (1979).
- 11 Simon (1972), pp. 225-50.
- 12 See Phillips and Putnam (1980).
- 13 See Halsey (1972) for a classic statement of the educational and social

consequences of 'the traditional isolation of school from community' in Britain. Halsey called for the development of 'community schools' to break down the historical boundaries between formal schooling and the resources of working class communities. This view, and its implications for the curricula of secondary schools, has been strongly endorsed by Hargreaves (1982).

- 14 See Johnson (1979).
- 15 Grace (1978), pp. 9-50.
- 16 *Ibid.*, pp. 10-13.
- 17 This is an example of the way in which contemporary professional teachers' attitudes to other 'teachers' can only be critically appreciated from an historical perspective. Organized teachers have good historical reasons for the defence of professional expertise. See Tropp (1957) and Lawn, M. and Grace, G. (Eds.) (1987) *Teachers: The Culture and Politics of Work*, Lewes, Falmer Press.
- 18 See Johnson (1970).
- 19 For a discussion of cultural capital see Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), pp. 71-106.
- 20 It is often forgotten that before critical sociologists of education 'discovered' the alienating character of formal schooling, Basil Bernstein in an early (and neglected) paper had pointed out that 'the teaching situation for the lower working class child is often persecutory and exposes him to a persistent attack on his language and so his normal mode of orientation' (1961, p. 306). In other words, Bernstein was already developing a social theory of learning which recognized the importance of cultural oppositions in schooling before this was to become the conventional wisdom of the 1970s.
- 21 This is the strategy classically adopted by conservative critics of publicly provided education. For one discussion of this see 'Turning the tables: The Conservative education offensive', in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (1981), op. cit.
- 22 Personal experience by teachers of social mobility through education can have the effect of producing a strong emphasis upon competitive examination success in schooling.
- 23 See McRobbie (1978).
- 24 Lees, S. (1986) *Losing Out*, London, Hutchinson.
- 25 This 'underachievement' often takes the form of early school leaving rather than of actual failure in examinations.
- 26 School strikes have been part of the hidden history of English working class schooling. They are now being rediscovered. See Humphries (1981).
- 27 It is obvious that if professional teachers already feel threatened by radical changes in their conditions of service this does not provide the best time for encouraging them to develop a working relation with 'teachers' from the community.
- 28 For one recent attempt to do this see Bailey (1984).
- 29 See, for instance, the work of Ramsey *et al.* (1983), pp. 272-304. See also the work of Lauder and Khan (1988).

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The Politics of Curriculum Innovation

G.I.A.R. Khan

Introduction

Prior to the introduction of *Tomorrow's Schools*, education in New Zealand was organized according to the bureaucratic structures best described by the concept of Weberian rationality. According to Weber bureaucracies are characterized by clearly defined work roles vested with precisely stated responsibilities and duties. These in turn are designed within hierarchically structured organizations according to which patterns of accountability and authority are clearly and unambiguously defined. The aim of such administrative structures is to create a system of control that can most efficiently meet the organization's goals. According to Weber (1978) bureaucracy:

is capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency and is in this sense formally the most rational known means of exercising authority over human beings. It is superior to any other form in precision, in stability, in the stringency of its discipline and its reliability. (p. 223)

However, Weber also realized that such an organization created a bureaucratic personality:

The professional bureaucrat is chained to his activity in his entire economic and ideological existence. In the great majority of cases he is only a small cog in a ceaselessly moving mechanism which prescribes to him an essentially fixed route of march ... The individual bureaucrat is, above all, forged to the common interest of all the functionaries in the perpetuation of the apparatus and the persistence of its rationally organised domination. (p. 998)

In the past the inflexible nature of bureaucracies and the personalities they created were accepted as the price that had to be paid for the reliability and control such organizations created. However, recently the nature of bureaucratic administration has come under challenge in the Western world

precisely because of its inflexibility, lack of creativity and insensitivity to what could be called market demands. Criticism of bureaucratic forms of administration and the impetus to change them have largely developed because of changes in the international economy.¹ Again, Weber suggested that the modern state is organized as an 'enterprise just like a factory' (p. 1394), so it is not surprising that a change in the administration of private sector organizations should flow on to the public sector because both are concerned with the most rational forms of control of human action. Alternative, post-Fordist administrative structures, distinguished by their emphasis on devolved power and flexibility, have been initiated by New Right governments. This is the result of an economic crisis for which they have prescribed cuts in state expenditure (see Codd, Gordon and Harker in this volume). The New Right has also argued that, in addition to cuts, the way welfare services have been delivered needs to be changed to restore public confidence in the welfare state.

Where bureaucratic personalities were seen to be unduly risk-averse, conformist reactive and largely non-responsive to externally driven forces of innovation and change, the new forms of flexible administration seek to create *intrapreneurial* risk-takers. The role of personal initiative is considered of great importance within the context of an administration in which devolution of power through the notion of 'responsible autonomy' is central. Now, instead of strict rules regulating performance, quality circles, task forces and informal groupings are expected to negotiate targets and goals with superiors and subordinates. In the state sector the idea of devolution has been coupled with an appeal to greater community democracy. This has meant that the government is aiming to get the community to do many of the administrative tasks formerly accomplished by the bureaucracy for the nominal price of a greater say in how, for example, their schools are to be run. In other words by selling the notion of community participation the government is aiming to cut its administrative bill, since community service is largely run on goodwill rather than financial reward. The administrative structure described in *Tomorrow's Schools* conforms to the post-Fordist model.²

In this chapter I want to discuss the factors influencing the nature and outcomes of a recent grass roots curriculum innovation in three working class schools in Christchurch, New Zealand. The innovation was conceived and implemented during the period of bureaucratic administration of education. As we shall see, many of the criticisms levelled at bureaucratic organizations as regards handling innovation applied in this particular case. But having described the rationale and 'progress' of this curriculum innovation and looked briefly at some of the outcomes, I want to end the chapter by asking whether, as a matter of fact, the post-Fordist structure of *Tomorrow's Schools* will prove more flexible in promoting curriculum innovation than its predecessor. For, when this administrative reform is placed in political context, there are reasons for believing that it could prove equally inflexible.

The Background

Curriculum reform in New Zealand has traditionally been vested in the state. Whilst schools and educational pressure groups have input into the discussion leading to reform, the 'control of the curriculum — and more particularly the development of strategies for change — rest with the central Department of Education (DOE).³ This focus of control, exemplified by such features as the periodic government-initiated curriculum reviews,⁴ and the institutional structures for syllabi reviews,⁵ emphasizes the centre-periphery agenda for educational change in New Zealand.⁶

Some have argued that the effects of this type of agenda have made teachers mere 'shapers of the school programme (based) on the national curriculum documents (rather) than seeing themselves as curriculum developers',⁷ whilst others have noted that the methods by which curriculum change takes place are 'remote and isolated from most classroom teachers'.⁸ At another level, the prevalent view that 'the Minister of Education's agents assume control of the change',⁹ has resulted in teachers' perception that the 'educational elites wielding political power from the centre have (been) ... rewarding conformity and punishing innovation'.¹⁰

Within this centre-periphery context and with few precedents for grass roots, curriculum innovation, a team consisting of secondary school principals and university-based researchers, with input from practising teachers, the polytechnic and the teachers' college, proposed a new curriculum as a 'systematic alternative to the current offerings in the senior secondary school'.¹¹ Known as the Integrated Transeducation Programme (ITP), it aimed to replace the existing subject-based, externally and norm referenced assessed School Certificate (SC) prescription with a fully integrated, internally assessed learning programme.

After some sixty-two items of correspondence, thirty-eight 'official' meetings and ten months, the new curriculum gained both the recognition and the resources to be implemented as a three-year pilot project. This chapter is based on the ongoing evaluation of the project which commenced in 1986 in three Christchurch secondary schools.

The Context: Reality and Research behind the Project

For the initiators, the ITP was seen as an attempt to develop 'a democratic and technologically relevant curriculum for fifth formers in three working class schools'.¹² Prior to discussing the way the curriculum is organized, it is important to highlight the political context within which this innovation was introduced and the immediate realities within the participating schools which gave the impetus for change. Failure to acknowledge these social and political dimensions of schooling would inevitably lead to impoverished policy formulation. Given that education is always and everywhere about

the political business of socialization and selection, the ITP attempt to change the nature and direction of these processes should be seen as a political intervention. As such, the success or failure of this intervention can be judged, at one level, by the degree it influences current curriculum reforms within the secondary system.

The political moment which proved decisive for the development of the ITP was the 1984 general election. Prior to the Labour Party's election victory, the Post Primary Teachers' Association had been in dispute with the National Minister of Education over the content and role of the sixth form curriculum. With increasing unemployment, which most affected the youth (school-leaver) labour market,¹³ large numbers of 'non-academic' young people were returning to school. Their presence in the sixth form raised questions about the suitability of an academic, university-dominated curriculum for this group of mainly working class students, but the National Minister of Education insisted on the maintenance of 'academic standards' and the 'status quo'. With the election of a Labour government and a new Minister of Education, the teachers won their case. Moreover, the Minister also signalled an interest in revising the curriculum and assessment procedures at all levels of the secondary school.¹⁴ For some time there had been dissatisfaction with the fifth form curriculum which was strongly subject oriented, and with the SC public examination system which has been shown to discriminate in favour of the more 'academic' subjects (see Hughes and Lauder in this volume) and, hence, against working class, in particular Maori, students.

Another significant curriculum development concerned the emergence of a plethora of school-to-work transition courses.¹⁵ The ad hoc design of these courses reflected no underlying educational rationale that could integrate them into the wider school curriculum. Moreover, most of the students in these transition courses were working class students. The manifest function of the transition courses was to prepare these students for jobs. However, these courses were bound to fail because few jobs existed, even for students with vocational training. Another feature of these transition courses was to improve students' self-esteem. The not-so-latent function of this psychological goal was to make students feel more comfortable with their second class status in school and with a future which promised low pay and unemployment.

Whilst some students were continuing along the traditional academic curriculum path, the working class students were being tracked into courses that lacked critical rigour, where the only educational aim was to boost students' self-esteem. The net effect of this was, on the one hand, an intellectually narrow, university-bound elite, and on the other, a mass of working class leavers who were 'well adjusted' to the status quo but lacked the critical skills needed to understand, let alone improve, their situation.

The impetus for a new curriculum to meet the needs of the students in the participating schools came from the realities of the 'school situation',

as well as the ongoing research at the university. The political context of the period was such that, with a change of government, the new Minister of Education actively promoted community participation and discussion on the secondary school curriculum and associated matters of assessment and qualification. Early discussion among the ITP team centred on the problem of 'reluctant returners' who had expressed dissatisfaction with the SC dominated syllabus. These discussions were held in the context of reduced school budgets and staff retrenchments.

Research in the Education Department of the University of Canterbury also had direct input into the development of the ITP project. The research findings showed that working class students of both sexes were more likely to leave school earlier than their middle and upper class counterparts and they were more likely to fail University Entrance (UE) examination. Moreover, these leavers were less likely to enrol at university even when they gained UE. What was most significant about these findings was that they held true even when scholastic ability, as measured by various IQ tests, was taken into account. As a result the life chances of working class students were likely to be less than those of other classes.¹⁶

A combination of these research findings and the need for curriculum initiatives at the school level led to the first ITP proposal document. This document, which was used for subsequent negotiations with the DOE, the School Certificate Examination Board (SCEB) as well as with the Minister of Education, argued that,

While it could be chimerical to believe compensatory education could solve the problem of inequality . . . nevertheless the education system can provide a necessary component in the overall strategy to combat inequity . . .¹⁷

The Negotiations: The Pathway to Recognition and Resources

Top-down curriculum reform in New Zealand has generally developed by means of initiatives from the central DOE filtering down through the Regional Education Offices (REO) to the schools. The pattern of review-recommendations-regulation changes invariably involved selected trial schools. These schools were offered 'total packages', with administration and in-service time, specific documents covering most items from teaching guidelines to evaluation procedures, as well as REO Inspectorate support. The ITP approach, however, reversed the situation: the curriculum was developed at the grass roots level and required formal negotiations with the various DOE and ROE Divisions, ranging from the SCEB and the Director of Schools to the Regional Superintendent of Education and school inspectors.

As a result of the initial series of team meetings, a specific agenda was prepared for the crucial issues of recognition and resources for the ITP.¹⁸

These latter issues dominated the discussion in the next phase of team meetings. Whilst political factors, such as the recent recommendations of the Review of Transition Education,¹⁹ the Minister of Education's initiative for a thorough review of the secondary curriculum assessment and the impending demise of the SCEB,²⁰ were perceived by the team as important negotiating points, the crucial determinants to get ITP off the ground were,

- (1) ... being recognized by the Department (for) School Certificate equivalence;
- (2) teaching (time) allocation; and
- (3) funding for the necessary resources.²¹

Table 8.1 shows the rationale for each of the above needs.

Whilst the above rationales were 'officially' discussed during the various

Table 8.1 Resource and recognition needs and their rationale

Resource and recognition needs from DOE.	Rationale for these needs used during negotiations
Grant of \$75,000	To purchase the necessary computers and curriculum resources, as well as costs associated with coordination and administration
Staffing allocation (4 teacher equivalents)	To avoid drawing upon the existing school staffing allocation
In-service teacher training time	To enable the new facilitators to have input into ongoing curriculum changes.
School Certificate equivalence	To get parental support and help student enrolment into the new course

meetings with the DOE and the REO, each of the items was part of a 'hidden agenda' within the school context. This was apparent from the discussion during the team meetings. The hidden agenda comprised three points. Firstly, 'to get the whole staff (teachers) support',²² funding and extra staffing support were seen as essential. In a climate of staff retrenchment, a new course would cause resentment because it would reduce the student numbers in existing subject courses and therefore threaten the jobs of some subject-teachers. Moreover, unless additional staffing was associated with the ITP, it would create additional training and workload for some teachers. Secondly, to ensure the ITP was not seen as just another easy option for less able students it needed not only a formal SC equivalence but the necessary funds to buy computers which would enhance the status of the new option within the school. This 'status' factor was perceived as crucial, hence the initial description of ITP as 'an alternative School Certificate course' was changed by the team to a new form 5 programme.

The third hidden reason for seeking DOE recognition and resources

was the long-term viability of the ITP curriculum. Two factors dominated this reasoning. First the team, conscious of the impending general elections, emphasized that the ITP had to be a three-year project, so that any change of government would not threaten the new curriculum. Secondly, given that the ITP curriculum was seen as novel, it would require more than a year's trial to be seen as successful.

The strategy evolved by the ITP team was a combination of political lobbying and formal negotiations with the DOE. Described later as a 'sandwich approach',²³ it involved directly approaching the Minister of Education, who was perceived as sympathetic and open to new initiatives, and at the same time negotiating for 'practical necessities' with the DOE and the REO. The chronology of events from the first meeting with the Regional Superintendent of Education (7 May 1985) to the formal meeting with the SCEB (18 July) and the many meetings with the Director of Schools, highlighted the lack of 'decision-making structures' for grass roots innovation.

The complexity of the negotiations and the difficulties that were encountered at every step of the way exemplify the problems of getting a grass roots initiative of this kind accepted by a bureaucracy. The hierarchical nature of the bureaucracy meant that approval for the project had to be gained at various levels and between different committees and individuals at the same level. As Hargreaves (1985) notes, the administrative complexity is such that:

each level has the capacity to generate proposals at its own level and to frustrate or obstruct the implementation of proposals framed at other levels. (p. 77)

By the time the negotiations were concluded the ITP team had consulted and gained approval from the REO, the local Inspectorate, DOE head office, the SCEB and the Minister of Education. Moreover, in order to win approval for the initiative, decisions between the various levels of the bureaucracy also had to be coordinated. Each group or individual had a distinct agenda of interests and procedures for dealing with decision-making and, therefore, in each case a new set of arguments had to be devised in order to satisfy the specific agenda being dealt with.

However, the reluctance of the bureaucracy, especially at the head office level, to make decisions which departed from accepted procedure came through most clearly. Every attempt was made to 'fit' the ITP into existing educational structures. In the end, the idea of allowing ITP students to gain up to the equivalent of four School Certificates was rejected and approval for the course was only given on a subject basis; it was decided that ITP students would have to follow the prescriptions laid down for English, mathematics, modular science and geography if they were to gain School Certificate qualifications.²⁴ As we shall see this represented a major blow to the original idea of an ITP curriculum. One immediate consequence of this ruling was that it was also determined that the local Inspectorate would

evaluate ITP courses to ensure that students were being taught to a standard comparable to that of non-ITP School Certificate courses. In the event some local inspectors showed considerable scepticism as regards the ITP because, as they put it, they didn't know how to evaluate a course of this kind and so they determined to judge it by the same criteria by which any other School Certificate course was appraised. This simply added to the pressure on the ITP teachers.

The inflexibility shown by the bureaucracy at these levels not only represented a determination to keep the ITP within the bounds of existing practices and procedures; it also represented, to a degree, bureaucrats' self-interest. This point is brought out by the debate between leading head office administrators and the ITP team. Much of the case presented by the ITP team rested on showing the ITP curriculum was consistent with government policy. For example, the Minister of Education had announced his intention of abolishing the present examination system, similarly he was keen to promote greater equality of opportunity for working class students in schools. In this context, asking for funds for a pilot project which was developing new forms of internal assessment and which was designed to promote the life chances of working class students seemed eminently reasonable.

But key head office negotiators used other aspects of government policy first to reject the ITP and then to attempt to tailor it to existing structures. For example, they pointed out that educational expenditure needed to be curtailed as part of the government's policing of state expenditure. Similarly, they insisted that no money could be given for computers for ITP classes because it was government policy not to give money for computers. But making working class students computer aware was an essential plank of the ITP curriculum. In the end, the various arguments and counter arguments boiled down to one issue — equity, and here the head office negotiators stood their ground by restating the view of equity that had, hitherto, governed education policy in New Zealand. According to this view equity meant every school should be treated equally as regards expenditure unless special exceptions, accepted by all interested parties, had been negotiated and ratified by the Minister of Education. Now, there was no provision for pilot projects like the ITP and any money spent on the project would be exceptional. The argument then was run out along the following lines: if we give money to this project, we shall create a precedent and every other school in the country will be demanding money for similar purposes. The fact that a detailed case had been made for this money and that it was consistent with government policy, as evidenced by the Minister of Education's support for the project, left the head office negotiators totally unmoved.

Why did this defence of the status quo represent bureaucratic self-interest? Any exception, such as the ITP, to carefully laid down procedures represented a threat to head office. If the project were accepted, they could expect criticism and adverse publicity from principals and other interest groups that had not been funded for special projects of this kind. The key

notion, here, is that of a precedent. Any precedents that were created meant extra trouble for the bureaucracy because they threatened to create a new set of legitimate demands that it had no way of controlling. As a result public conflict was a likely outcome which would, ultimately, reflect badly on the bureaucracy.

However, early in the negotiations the ITP team had lobbied the Minister of Education, independently of going through the formal channels, which again, were carefully controlled by the bureaucracy.²⁵ By lobbying the Minister through informal channels an element of uncertainty was introduced into the bureaucracy; it did not know what interests the Minister was attempting to satisfy through sanctioning the project or, consequently, how committed he was to it. Therefore, from head office down to the Inspectorate care was taken to ensure that it appeared that the Minister's wishes were being carried out; the only strategy now available to the bureaucracy was to delay and fit the ITP into the existing structures — which it did reasonably effectively.

For, as indicated above, the ITP had to compromise on the certification issue,²⁶ and that meant that teachers and students on the programme had to satisfy the criteria for passing School Certificate and the criteria for the ITP curriculum. As a result the bureaucracy had introduced a trojan horse into the project, which, while not wholly undermining it, severely curtailed the initial conception.

The Curriculum: Content and Classroom Processes

The ITP curriculum is designed to be a democratic, integrated curriculum for mixed ability students. Emphasis is placed on group project work in order to encourage cooperation rather than competition between students. In outline such a curriculum might seem desirable for any form of democratic education but it is particularly aimed at making schooling more accessible for working class students. We know, for example, that working class students often relate tenuously to the demands of schooling (Brown, 1988) or resist it (Willis, 1977) precisely because schooling is part of an alien middle class culture (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). As such, working class students are likely to be alienated from school or feel relatively powerless in the face of its demands. As an antidote to such alienation the ITP curriculum can be negotiated between students and facilitators so that, in a genuine sense, these students can have some control over their learning. This enables the curriculum to become relevant to the interests and concerns of working class students.

But a further condition needs to be satisfied if the curriculum is to be relevant to working class students' interests; it needs to be integrated. The oft-cited rationale for a class-relevant integrated curriculum is that it reflects thought processes which, more often than not, 'naturally' cross subject

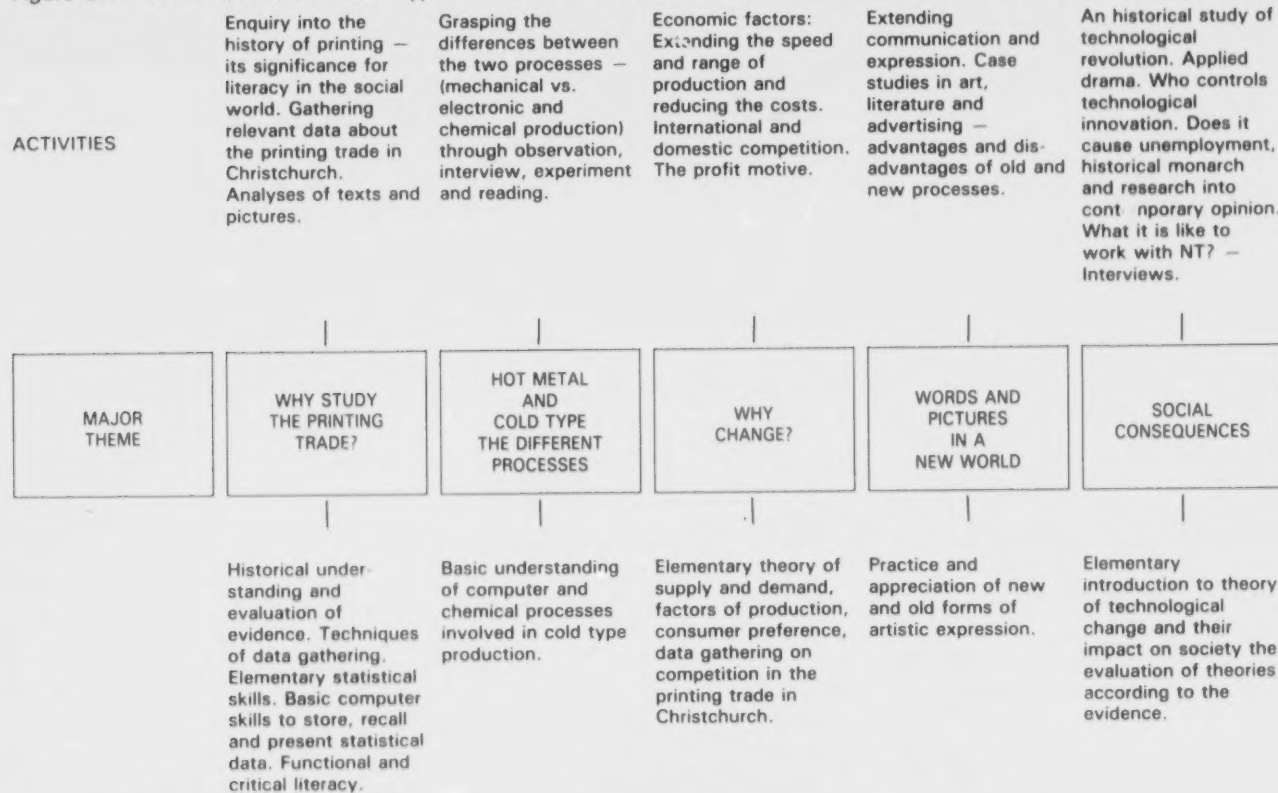
boundaries. To remove these boundaries is to remove artificial barriers to working class understanding. A further problem with the traditional subject oriented curriculum is that it is hierarchical in the sense that certain subjects are class and gender tagged as more prestigious than others. As Hughes and Lauder show (in this volume) working class students are frequently put off from doing the more 'prestigious' subjects so important elements of the curriculum are denied them. In contrast an integrated curriculum will break down this hierarchy and make all of the curriculum accessible to working class students. Finally, within the subject oriented curriculum links and connections between subjects which enable us to make sense of our world, are not taught or are taught haphazardly. Yet if we are to provide students with a critical understanding of their world the connections need to be made. An integrated curriculum allows us to do so.

The ITP curriculum is cooperatively organized because there is clear evidence that cooperation amongst students, especially those in mixed ability groups, promotes learning more effectively than if it is undertaken by individuals in competition.²⁷ And learning is largely based on project work because it enables students greater control over what they learn and they can choose projects which are of interest to them.

In all three schools the ITP class, which has ranged in size from eight to twenty-two students, is based in a home-room situation. The students have an input into the way the room is organized. Unlike most traditional secondary school classrooms, the tables are intentionally large (either round or oblong) so that students can work in groups around them. There are designated 'study areas' and 'socializing areas' within the home room. In two of the schools, there are also special computer areas within the rooms, so that the students have access at any time.

The students' learning programme revolves around a combination of doing the set SC subjects and the ITP modules. One of the SC subjects (English) is fully incorporated into the various modules which they complete during the year. Attempts are made to integrate topics from the syllabi of the other three subjects (mathematics, geography and modular science) into the ITP modules. Nevertheless, there is a formal teaching component to fulfil the requirements of the SC prescription. The ITP modules, an example of which is given in Figure 8.1, each last from six to eight weeks and are divided into several projects. The selection of the module topic and the outline of the projects are negotiated between the facilitators and the students. Each project, which may involve either individual or group work, has a 'practical' component. This may involve students going to community libraries, or interviewing adults outside school, or even visiting work places. After completing each project, the students then do a 'production' of the entire module. This involves the students selecting and discussing what they have learnt and reproducing this for the benefit of others (students, parents, etc.). This production is presented as a poster, or newspaper, or sometimes as a video documentary.

Figure 8.1. From hot metal to cold type: overview of a module on new technology (NT) in printing trade (6-8 weeks)



While modules and project work topics are negotiated, facilitators ensure that the content of each project covers some of the skills and understandings required by the SC prescriptions. Assessment of students' work is at four levels. Firstly, all the ITP students sit the DOE external reference tests for English, mathematics and science, which generates the 'bag of grades' for SC at the end of the year. For internal moderation of subjects within each school, the ITP students sit Common Subject Tests along with other form 5 students. At another level, the group projects and final production are also assessed, with the students having some input into the final grade allocation. Finally, the ITP students regularly have class tests on the 'skills and understandings component' of the four SC subjects. All the above are then tabulated by the facilitator and the subject teacher(s), to produce the end-of-year SC grades. In addition to this, students are also given a comprehensive ITP Profile, which has been specially designed in close association with employer groups, parents, students and teachers.

In addition to the SC prescription and the ITP integrated modules, the students' learning programme also involves attending a week-long course at Pitcaithly House. Here, all the ITP students from the three schools undertake a programme which ranges from developing social and group dynamics skills to vocational awareness and preparation of curriculum vitae.

Observations and Outcomes

You start primary school at age five or whatever, and you go ten years . . . in ordinary classes. They (teachers) say, 'sit at your desk and write down now, do this, do that . . . blah . . . blah'. Then you come into something like this and straight away it's a whole different . . . (ITP student)

Being on the ITP you have to unlearn many of the roles I took for granted as a teacher . . . For a start you're called by your first name . . . you don't have total control over what happens . . . then you start seeing them (students) as individuals . . . (ITP facilitator)

. . . well, on the whole they (ITP students) seem to be more confident and sure about themselves than many of the other groups who come here . . . (Transition teacher from another school)

The overall impression on viewing the completed projects and production work is that the students are highly motivated and have considerable self-confidence. The scheme seems to have given the students the message that learning is enjoyable. The students have a high level of self-esteem. This is evident from the very professional level of presentation of the students' work. In terms of motivation and confidence ITP students are operating at a good fifth form standard. (External moderator and SC subject examiner)

Since its initial conception in 1985, each of the phases, from the planning and negotiations for approval to the implementation in the classroom, has been thoroughly documented as part of the systematic evaluation of the project. This chapter is based on a still incomplete analysis of the data, so the following observations are, of necessity, tentative.

As a school-based curriculum initiative, the most difficult problem that the ITP facilitators and students have had to overcome is reconciling the aims of the ITP integrated curriculum with the demand, imposed by the SCEB, that students satisfy the criteria for passing separate SC subjects. In effect this reproduces at the class level the general dilemma of choosing between a credential-led competitive curriculum or a class-led cooperative curriculum (Lauder and Khan, 1988). Managing the dual curriculum remains a source of tension which has emerged in areas like timetabling, teacher selection and assessment procedures. The pressures of the state examination system and visits from the local inspectorate have resulted in the integrated component being at times marginalized. Directive teaching to subject syllabus sits uncomfortably beside an open-ended, issue exploration project for both facilitators and the students.

At another level, the pressures the ITP innovation faces in the school are much more subtle and indirect. An extensive survey of the teachers in each of the three schools has revealed that not only do they consider the ITP programme as an 'easy option' — this despite the dual curriculum workload — but also that the type of work students do is not 'academic' enough. For the students there has been pressure to return to what they call the 'normal schooling' because of the underestimation of the value of the ITP course.

In terms of the traditional measures of outcome, the SC results (1987) in English, science and geography indicate that there were no significant differences in results between the ITP and the non-ITP contrast group (who were selected by the form 5 deans). In mathematics the level of significance (significant at the 0.05 level) is slightly in favour of the non-ITP group. The various other measures, ranging from PAT study skills to subject common tests, all indicate that the ITP students were not disadvantaged in relation to the non-ITP contrast group.

There is clear acknowledgment, by those involved in the programme as well as non-ITP teachers, that the students are more confident in their ability to cooperate, discuss and work in a self-directive way. A sample of students' responses highlights other self-assessed outcomes:

- I've learned to motivate myself more.
- Learned to get on with everyone.
- Learned different way of doing things.
- Enabled me to get out around the community.
- Forced me to become more self-motivated.
- Learning to communicate better.

It helped me to speak up without becoming embarrassed too easily.

I liked the way we had a say in class.

Toleration and acceptance of others.

An earlier introduction to computers than other fifth formers.

An introduction to coping with frustration and stress.

It gave me the ability to go out and do things.

Listening to the students' views on the ITP reinforces the point that the methods employed to evaluate the project have a crucial bearing on how it will be judged. The method of allowing the students to evaluate the ITP through group discussions and interviews helped them to understand their ambivalence within a wider context and showed an underlying coherence to their thinking. For instance,

There is too much freedom . . . (you) can do what you like . . . P
(the facilitator) wasn't strict enough . . . [later on in the interview]
I don't like being told what to do . . . I can think for myself . . .
guess I had to get adjusted to do (class work) by myself . . . lot
different from having to be told. (ITP student)

The follow-up study of the 1986 students showed some 72 per cent deciding to further their formal education. They chose subjects like accounting, biology, chemistry, computer studies, English, horticulture, psychology and technical design in the sixth form. Of the remainder, all were either in full-time or part-time paid employment, or enrolled in some of the Department of Labour training schemes.

Conclusion

Despite the costly compromises that had to be made to the design of the curriculum, the merits of the project have been such that the principals in two of the three schools have decided to continue with it at a number of form levels. If we now stand back from the outcomes to look at the 'progress' of the ITP since its conception, it is clear that the process of innovation has been refracted through a series of political agendas from those of the bureaucracy through to the micro politics of the school. At each level individuals and organizations have interpreted the ITP proposal in terms of their own agenda and interests. In this respect it would not be true to say the original conception has been distorted for at every step of the project it has been interpreted differently by different groups: it has, however, been changed in its aims and content from that originally envisaged by its authors.

It may appear that the education bureaucracy has come out of this project particularly badly. But before we rush to the conclusion that the new

administrative structures outlined in *Tomorrow's Schools* will provide greater opportunity for grass roots innovation there are a number of further points about both administrative systems we should consider. Firstly, while the educational bureaucracy both delayed and 'reshaped' the ITP proposal, the degree of consultation at all levels and the painstaking procedures by which decisions were arrived at ensured that the way in which taxpayers' money was spent was carefully considered. Moreover, the case for the ITP had to be strong in order to withstand the critical examination it was subjected to at every level. Finally, whether it was justified or not, and possibly more for its own interests than those of the public, the bureaucracy attempted to be even handed in the way it allocated resources. In all these respects it conformed to Weber's characterization of bureaucracy discussed in the introduction.

How will the post-Fordist administrative structures of *Tomorrow's Schools* measure up in relation to the traditional bureaucracy's performance? Firstly, some general points: in principle the administrative structure now being installed may well prove to be more flexible and responsive to initiatives like the ITP; what may well be lost is a uniformity in the way all schools are treated and this may lead to greater inequalities of funding between schools. In addition, it may well be that the meticulous probing and testing of cases like the ITP, by the bureaucracy, will be lost. While the way the bureaucracy went about this cannot be supported(!), the principle that cases for additional funds should be rigorously tested is an important one. These are, of course, points of a fairly general speculative nature, but when we look at how the current administrative organization would deal with grass roots curriculum innovation, more concrete issues emerge. For example, in the present political and social context in which New Right thinking has held sway there is a clear possibility that curriculum innovation will end.

Consider the impact of increased contestability (through dezoning) and a system of assessment of students, teachers and schools, such as that to be implemented in the UK where students are to be tested at the ages of 7, 11 and 14. On the one hand increased contestability would intensify the credential race. Without the security of a guaranteed number of students, schools would concentrate on the credential-led curriculum and fail to experiment with curricula that may be better suited to their students. Similarly, where assessment tests a limited set of skills it is likely that the school will focus on coaching for them to the exclusion of all else. This is especially so if the school is in competition with other schools for its students. Fortunately it has been decided, for the time being, to apply a fairly rigorous form of zoning. However, it is not hard to imagine that an incoming National government would move to dezoning. By the same token, while new forms of assessment are still being considered, there must be a distinct possibility that the kind of testing implemented in England will be copied here. This is because central government may find it hard to control an education system that has been so decentralized. In general, the lesson of New Right

governments has been that, while they have engaged in the rhetoric of devolution, they have, in fact, increased the power of the state.²⁸ Should a narrowly defined assessment system be imposed here, the effect on curriculum innovation and on teachers' desire to innovate will be stultifying. Not only will there be a strong incentive to coach students in the narrow range of skills being tested but, in effect, teachers will be proletarianized — their professional competence questioned by external testing and their ability to think creatively replaced by the routine procedures of getting students through the tests.

Finally, there is a further point worth noting. The New Right has had little to say, in New Zealand, about the nature of the curriculum, although it can be appreciated that a combination of de zoning and narrow assessment procedures would lead to the maintenance of a traditional curriculum. Indeed the general thrust of current policy has been toward administrative reform, and the curriculum reforms proposed in the early years of this government have largely been dropped (see Codd, Gordon and Harker in this volume). Moreover, there appears to be no mechanism to allow for grass roots innovation under *Tomorrow's Schools* which would allow schools to bid for extra funds. Indeed curriculum policy would seem to remain the prerogative of the new Ministry of Education — in other words, curriculum change will still emanate from the top. The conclusion, then, is that unless special provisions are made for systematic curriculum innovation, the deeply conservative principles enshrined in the secondary school bureaucracy are likely to remain despite the radical administrative reforms. But the situation is likely to be even worse if either de zoning or narrow assessment procedures are adopted. If both are adopted, we can say farewell to any grass roots creativity in the curriculum.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

- 1 See Sable (1982) and also *Marxism Today*, October 1988, for a discussion of the changes in the international economy which have created the post-Fordist organization response in the private sector.
- 2 See the introduction to this volume for a discussion of the main policy proposals in *Tomorrow's Schools*.
- 3 Ramsay (1983), p. 2.
- 4 *The Core Curriculum Review* (1984) and *Curriculum Review for Schools* (1987).
- 5 See McKenzie (1983).

- 6 See Nisbet (1979).
- 7 McGee (1979), p. 38.
- 8 Weeds (1979), p. 167.
- 9 Ramsay (1983), p. 2.
- 10 McKenzie (1983), p. 20.
- 11 *ITP Proposal Document* (1985), p. 2.
- 12 Lauder and Khan (1988), p. 59.
- 13 See Khan (1986).
- 14 A Committee was set up by the Minister of Education in 1986 to review curriculum, assessment and qualification issues.
- 15 See Khan (1986) for further details.
- 16 See Lauder, Hughes and Taberner (1984).
- 17 *ITP Proposal Document* (1985), p. vii.
- 18 The team sought SC equivalence for the ITP curriculum, because without this it would have been difficult to convince parents to enrol their children on the new course. Moreover, the SC equivalence was essential to enable the ITP students to proceed to form 6 and beyond.
- 19 See Scott (1985) report.
- 20 *The Press*, 12 December 1985.
- 21 Notes from ITP team meeting — quoting a principal.
- 22 Notes from ITP team meeting — quoting a principal.
- 23 Notes from ITP team meeting — quoting a university-based researcher.
- 24 Official SC Subjects Numbers 15, 42, 45 and 49.
- 25 When the ITP team went to see the Minister of Education, they were first briefed by a senior Education Department official, who then accompanied them to the meeting.
- 26 There were other compromises, ranging from having to change the name of the project from 'Integrated Transition Course' to 'Integrated Transeducation Programme' to being formally scrutinized by the REO inspectors once every school term.
- 27 See Lauder and Khan (1988) for a more detailed discussion of the relationship between the ITP and working class schooling. This chapter discusses the evidence in favour of cooperative learning.
- 28 For example, from the UK see Gamble (1988). In New Zealand education, approximately 80 per cent of the school charter, under *Tomorrow's Schools*, is determined.

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Towards Pluralism and Democracy: The Administration of an Inner City School

Ros Heinz

Introduction

Education is to do with empowering people to take charge of their lives, including what they learn. But personal autonomy, by itself, is not enough. The interpersonal skills of working cooperatively and communicating effectively are equally important in a pluralist and democratic society. However, in contradiction to the aims of educating for democracy, schools usually have hierarchical organizations (see Lauder in this volume) which create differentials in status and pay, power and authority: a potent blend in the promotional structure and the culture of the school. Similarly the way decisions are made has a profound effect on the school ethos and the hidden curriculum: a hierarchical organization tells students that inequalities of power and authoritarian forms of decision-making are part of the 'natural' order of things. Since the majority of principals are men, this message is particularly effective in maintaining patriarchal structures.

However, the social world we live in is not only highly inequalitarian but also pluralist. As in other societies, New Zealand is becoming increasingly differentiated by racial, gender and class subcultures and this is most prominently reflected in the make up of students in many schools, particularly those in the inner city. In historical terms, the most crucial factor in the development of a pluralist society in New Zealand has been the resurgence of Maoridom. As a result, a significant proportion of inner city students come to school with a different cultural and political perspective and with a desire to speak in Maori rather than English. In addition migration from the South Pacific, South-East Asia, as well as non-English European countries, has meant that schools now have to cope with many students for whom English is not their native tongue. Finally, there are now many different kinds of youth culture, with their own, distinctive forms of expression. Given the pluralist nature of the intake to inner city schools, the challenge which

confronts us is how to reconcile the varying, often conflicting, cultural assumptions which different groups bring to the school, while at the same time giving each group a voice in the affairs of the school.

Arguably, the only solution to the problems of educating for democracy and recognizing the pluralist nature of the society we now live in is to provide each subcultural group with the chance to express its cultural identity by making the curriculum relevant to its cultural perspective, while also giving it a say in how the school is run. The following records an attempt to derive a pluralist democratic model of educational administration and curriculum development in an inner city coeducational secondary school, Hagley High School.

Background

Hagley High School lies in the heart of Christchurch, a city of one-third of a million people. The general contours of the pluralist nature of Hagley can be described, briefly, by reference to its intake: 54 per cent of students are teenagers in forms 3-7 (12 to 17 years of age); a further 16 per cent of teenagers are recruited into the senior school from other schools. In addition, Hagley offers a second chance education to adults who are eligible for enrolment if they have been away from schooling for over a year and are over the age of 18. They now comprise 30 per cent of the school roll and, as such, there are approximately 400 full- and part-time adult students on campus. The age of these students ranges from 18 to 60 and they are eligible for a means-tested government allowance to help with their education. The school provides further support in the form of a creche since the majority of these students are women.

In addition, the school is one of the country's thirteen designated community centres. This gives it a special mandate and the resources to provide continuing education classes in the evening to enable adults to pursue their education part-time. Upward of 100 classes are offered four nights a week. They range from study for public examinations to hobby and special interest classes. In any one year, as many as 4000 students might continue their education for vocational purposes or to pursue an interest or to enhance their skills.

In terms of ethnic composition, approximately 10 per cent of the school population are Maori. In addition the school caters for over twenty individuals and groups for whom English is not a first language through the Intensive English Language Unit. Of these the largest groups comprise students of Vietnamese and Samoan origin. Combined they form a further 10 per cent of the school population. Overall, then, it can be seen that the intake to Hagley is wide-ranging in terms of both age and ethnic background. The challenge, therefore, is to provide a learning environment in which a varied group of students can thrive.

The Development of a Pluralist Institution

In order to meet the demands of a pluralist institution a variety of curricula and administrative innovations has been introduced. In the case of each innovation the aim has been to provide entry points to school life which can be seen by the various subcultural group intakes as relevant to them. In saying this, it should be stressed that these innovations are for both students and their teachers, precisely because teachers themselves are not a homogeneous grouping but identify with particular cultural groupings with their own concerns and perspectives. (It is worth noting that on the New Right model teachers' interests — as providers — are counterposed to those of students — as consumers, but where teachers belong to an exploited group — women and Maori for example — it can be argued that women and Maori teachers have strong interests in common with their student counterparts.) By accepting that human development cannot be cast into a single mould the aim is to reduce alienation and conflict on the one hand, while providing students with the opportunity for fulfilling their potential on the other. In this context it is worth stressing that alienation is easily created where schools demand that students conform to a single set of cultural norms. Once such a demand is made those who do not conform can all too quickly be labelled 'deviant' and from that point alienation and resistance quickly follow.

The Whanau

Given the high rates of educational failure among Maori (see the introduction to this volume) it was felt that something needed to be done which had an impact on the school ethos, which established Hagley as a bicultural institution. Maori language had been included in the modules that all form 3 students are required to take as an important step in this direction. But this move had no discernible impact on the school's culture. The opportunity to take things further did not come until there were two full-time teachers to make a commitment to bicultural education and who, themselves, were beginning to stand tall in their own culture. Out of our dialogue came the idea of a whanau — a physical and emotional space for any students who, with their families, wanted to have an education which gave equal value to both Maori and Pakeha cultures. Under a heading 'Future Developments', the following statement was made in the school prospectus for 1987:

Hagley is offering in 1987 a Whanau (home room) system for third form students who wish to develop in both Maori and Pakeha cultures. Students will do the same core subjects as other students plus an equal time allocation for Maori language. Every subject undertaken in this course, core and module, will have a high input of Maoritanga. Teachers taking this class will be committed to the

importance of Maoritanga. This is the beginning of bilingual education at Hagley High School.

In the first year twenty-three students enrolled, seventeen Maori and six Pakeha. Five left during the year.

Once the decision had been made there followed a period of close consultation with the local Maori community and in particular by the school's kauamata (elder) to act as adviser and consultant in all decisions. The whanau was located in the heart of the school in order to symbolize the centrality of Maori culture to New Zealand/Aotearoa.

Taha Maori

In line with the national core curriculum Hagley also teaches Taha Maori (Maori culture) throughout the school in an attempt to create mutual understanding between the cultures. For example, the English Department ensures that books are carefully selected to include Maori writers and cultural perspectives and includes components of Maori language in its courses. Women's studies and history courses combine to teach about Maori women, while the Science Department teaches about Maori medicine. The aim, then, is to bring things Maori into every aspect of a student's learning.

Gender Equity

Attempts to develop gender equity are made at various levels for both staff and students. There is a Gender Equity Committee which meets weekly to discuss education for girls. Out of it has come already the establishment of a Women's Studies Department. Courses run under its aegis in the fifth, sixth and seventh forms include 'women's studies', 'women in history', 'growing up female' and at night school 'lesbian perspectives'. In addition selective girl-only classes are being planned for 1990, particularly in maths and science, since there is strong research evidence that such classes can encourage girls to participate in maths and science education, help them develop a sense of self-worth in these areas and provide a role-model for younger girls.

The ITP Programme

The Integrated Transeducation Programme (ITP) (see Khan in this volume) is a fifth-form course designed to empower working class students so that they can have some measure of control over the curriculum and make it relevant to their interests. The course is taught in a home room with a

facilitator guiding students' learning. Much of the learning is through group project work so that students can negotiate the projects they embark on and feel that what they are producing is part of their world. Classes are of mixed ability. The course aims to teach intellectual skills which subject-centred courses rarely do, intellectual initiative, research skills and cooperative learning. It has a work experience component which forms part of the project work.

The Mediation Service

In 1987 a mediation service was set up at Hagley so that in disputes, staff and students could negotiate solutions rather than have them imposed through external disciplinary procedures. Initially external advisors were brought into the school to train mediators and a coordinator for the service. Of the initial group that were selected for training as mediators there were four staff, two adult students and twelve adolescent students. Decisions taken by this group are made on a democratic basis. Mediation can come about either through referral by staff or through self-referral. Mediation is not being used primarily as a means of dealing with violence, vandalism and truancy as, for example, it has been in America; rather it represents a way of dealing with disputes which is consistent with the school ethos. But it does provide a further option in cases where previously parents had been called in or students had been suspended. Between its inception in 1987 and the end of 1988, 113 disputants have used the service, of which eighty-five were between students, thirteen were between staff and students, five were between parents and staff and ten people from outside the school used the service. Students from all levels of the school used the service.

These, then, are examples of the innovations that have been introduced at Hagley to cater for the various kinds of students now attending the school. In discussing these innovations a number of things should be borne in mind. Firstly, it has to be acknowledged that a pluralist institution is not always harmonious. There are outright contradictions between the assumptions and aspirations of different groups within the school. For example, certain kinds of Maori woodcarving, taught on the whanau, can only be done by men according to Maori tradition. But this tradition clearly contradicts the Western liberal demand that women have the same opportunities as men. A deeply felt contradiction of this kind cannot be overcome within the confines of the school. However, the emphasis on a school ethos of negotiating settlements and solutions attempts to create the tolerance needed for cultures with conflicting assumptions to coexist. Secondly, the innovations discussed above have not been developed according to some master plan but have been initiated by various individuals and groups, within the school, as a response to perceived needs; as such innovation has not been 'imposed' from the top down.

It is at this point that democratic participation in the school's decision-making process needs to be discussed because, at Hagley, it is viewed as an essential component in meeting the demands of a pluralist education and is essential to the ongoing process of innovation. The key point here is that democratic decision-making facilitates innovation; if all those affected by a decision have a say in its making — have, in other words, a stake in the running of the organization — they are much more likely to think about the organization's needs. Moreover, democratic decision-making allows individuals to voice their concerns, identify needs and discuss how they can be met in a way which allows the collective intelligence of the organization to bear on the problems it confronts. At a time when democracy is out of favour and 'efficiency' is in vogue it is worth noting that the democratic organization of schools is not only essential for the promotion of equity and social harmony, it is also potentially a more efficient form of decision-making because it keeps communication channels open and allows for a flexible collective response to collective problems. There is, after all, research to demonstrate what all principals know — that they have the power to manipulate outcomes which preclude open discussion while appearing to act in a consultative way. At Hagley, the greatest pay-off to more democratic forms of decision-making lies in its ongoing processes of innovation. How, then, has democratic decision-making been organized at Hagley and what problems does it confront?

The Background to the Hagley Participatory Model

John Watts, principal of Countesthorpe College, Leicester, was the original inspiration for the democratic model developed at Hagley. He visited New Zealand in 1977 and included Hagley High School in his itinerary for we shared in common the respective principalships of two secondary schools strongly oriented to the community. The difference between the schools, however, is that Countesthorpe, which opened in 1970, was custom-built and innovative in its approach from the outset, whereas Hagley has evolved over more than a century and has reflected, since 1858, every nuance of educational fashion and official policy. According to Watts, democracy was made possible at Countesthorpe by the first principal's determination to recruit staff sympathetic to participatory decision-making. It was for this reason that Watts was doubtful as to whether an existing school could go over to a participatory system because such a system depends upon an initial agreement of aims. He did not recommend it.

He did, however, describe in some detail the way democracy at Countesthorpe worked. The Principal Standing Committee at the school consists of a quarter of the staff with student representation and it holds office for a quarter of a year. This means that every member of the staff has a period on the Committee. It meets weekly to receive reports and to

make intermediate decisions. It issues minutes the following day so decisions are communicated rapidly. The body which establishes the general principles of policy is the moot which is open to all, including non-teaching staff and students. Other decision-making groups, including the Standing Committee, are responsible directly or indirectly to the moot and any individual may challenge their decisions through the moot.

The need for Hagley to adopt a participatory style of decision-making stemmed largely from the perception of the changing nature of the intake at Hagley and the inability of a monocultural hierarchical organization to deal with its demands. However, there were further reasons, both personal and professional, for attempting to change toward a participatory management style. Personally, I have a belief in the common sense and reasonableness of people when they are provided with all the information and have time to enter into dialogue and debate the relevant issues. It is just as Pericles suggests:

this presupposes an optimistic estimate of the natural political capacity of the average man (and woman). Severe training, intense specialisation are not required to form an intelligent judgement of political and social questions.

Professionally, such a system of decision-making enabled staff to gain experience and take responsibility for policy decision-making in the school. This seemed particularly important in relation to women members of staff because there are so few women principals in the New Zealand education system. Giving women at all levels within the school the experience and confidence to make important policy decisions could enable them to apply for senior positions within schools which still operated in a hierarchical way. Within Hagley, students would get the message that women ranked equally with men in the decision-making process. Furthermore, new developments in the curriculum, teaching methods, assessment and reporting procedures are placing increasing demands on teachers. Consequently they have sacrificed much of the autonomy they once enjoyed in the classroom. Therefore, in return for meeting these new demands, it only seems reasonable to offer teachers the opportunity to have a say in determining the conditions under which they work.

The Processes of Change towards Democracy

To be prepared to develop democratic decision-making structures at Hagley was one thing, putting democracy into practice was another. For a start, when the idea was first mooted, there was little enthusiasm from senior management for it. Of the three senior management teachers two had recently acquired their status, and I think they were resistant to the idea of now sharing their newly gained power, so soon anyway. In addition such an idea coming

from the top was viewed with some suspicion. What was the motive behind the suggestion?

In retrospect it seems clear that any school would encounter resistance of this kind because change of such a drastic nature challenges the personal and professional identity of those most threatened because, of course it undermines the rules of the conventional game. It also challenges the way individuals relate to one another. Under an authoritarian system the individual is less exposed to criticism and the need for dialogue; to a certain extent they are protected by their authority. In a democratic system people have to be prepared to give away an ideal goal and meet people half-way. There has to be both tolerance and humility. Self-importance, pride and competitiveness have no place in a democratic system. All of these issues were no doubt raised by the suggestion of democratic decision-making and it is not surprising that the response from senior management was, therefore, negative.

In the event I did not choose to confront the problem directly. I recognized the difficulties and decided that pushing for democracy in the face of opposition would be counter-productive. I could also see why John Watts advised against following his example! I bided my time, having to wait six years! In 1977, when I first introduced the idea of democracy, I was only in my second year as principal and the decision to wait was probably a good one.

In 1983, after eighteen months dialogue on participatory management, the leap was finally taken. It was initiated by a member of staff, newly-returned from study leave in the UK where he had seen at the Sutton Centre in Nottingham a similar model to Countesthorpe. Around him gathered a nucleus of staff who formed a working group with the aim of coming up with a proposed decision-making structure. Despite the enthusiasm of the group making the case for participatory management, there was some resistance and inertia from the staff.

The immediacy of crisis management which takes up so much of a teacher's time and the demands of teaching made it difficult for the staff to find time to meet and continue the debate over the proposed changes in structure. As a result there were bouts of activity and discussion followed by periods of inertia. There were, as was to be expected in a large staff, both cynics and resisters — those who questioned the underlying motives for the change and those who took a them versus us position of saying, 'It's your job to be principal, to make the decisions, you do it, that's what you get paid for.' Others simply took the position that authoritarian leadership was more acceptable to them, either because they genuinely felt it was or because they didn't want the added demands of time and energy that participatory decision-making required.

In my view an unequal pay and salary structure is not necessarily contradictory to participatory decision-making. While it clearly doesn't help, there are compensatory factors at work which allow everyone to gain even

in cases where salary and official status are unequal. These are:

- 1 Where morale is high in a school, people want to be involved in the action, and participatory-democracy allows them to be.
- 2 There is more satisfaction to be had in the job if there is a sense of contributing to the overall direction of the school.
- 3 Unofficial status and recognition by peers can be achieved irrespective of the official structures.
- 4 It is recognized that such involvement provides a good training for promotion within the official structure.
- 5 The above factors are often valued by teachers more than salary and status.

Obviously some of the above factors were at work during the debate on democratic decision-making because in the end the staff voted to give it a go.

The Hagley Model of Participatory Decision-making

The following proposal for a Policy Committee, made in October 1984, formed the basis for what is now our Standing Committee:

- 1 The Policy Committee will be responsible for the consideration of ideas and the formulation of policy within the school. It will have the power to direct the school management team, rather than merely to recommend, and it will replace the current policy committee. (The word 'direct' was later modified to 'recommend to'. A later addition was that 'the principal be given the power of veto'. For discussion of these changes see below.)
- 2 The Committee will be formed consisting of the principal and nine members of staff. This group of nine will be drawn from the full-time teaching staff, the office and ancillary staff, the caretaker and the grounds staff.
- 3 The nine members will be drawn by random selection from a pool of staff who indicate that they would be prepared to serve on the Policy Committee.
- 4 No staff member will serve a second term of office until all those who wish to, have served a term.
- 5 Three of the nine members will be replaced at the end of each school term. Thus, members will serve a term of office consisting of three school terms and, at times after the initial establishment of the Committee, it will consist of at least seven members with some experience of the work of the Committee. The Committee will be able to invite any staff member to advise on any previous policy decisions.
- 6 The Policy Committee will always contain ten members. If any

- member resigns she/he will be replaced prior to the next meeting of the Committee.
- 7 Policy Committee meetings will be open to all staff. Staff have automatic rights to observe but not to speak.
 - 8 Speaking rights will be granted to any staff member who makes a request to the chairperson at least 1 day prior to any meeting. Speaking rights will be granted for a specific item on the agenda. (This has since been modified to grant automatic speaking rights to any staff member without prior notice.)
 - 9 The Committee will be chaired by a member other than the Principal.
 - 10 The following issues have been recognized as requiring further discussion, preferably by the Policy Committee at its first meeting. It is felt that these details, while very important, need to be considered by those actually on the Committee:
 - (a) the number and frequency of meetings;
 - (b) the time and location of meetings;
 - (c) the method of compiling agendas.

The Standing Committee, which is what the Policy Committee is now called, is responsible for formulating the agenda for staff meetings and ensuring that the latter have a rotating chairperson.

Within the school it is understood that the responsibility for decisions and action belong to the staff via the Standing Committee. Many intermediate decisions are made by other committees of a standing or ad hoc nature.

The changes indicated in item 1 above now need to be explained. Legally the responsibility for what goes on in the school lies with the principal. This being the case (and until an entity other than the principal is legally recognized as being responsible for the school) it seemed important that in the event of something unusual happening the principal retained the power of decision-making.

In practice, there has been no tension between participatory management and the legal status of the principal. There was a time, early on when I thought there would be and I encouraged the staff to 'direct' me through the participatory process. It seemed important that they should understand I was serious about the new way of decision-making. In fact, the staff without any prompting modified item 1 to read 'recommend' rather than 'direct' and that recognition of my legal role displayed a sense of realism and pragmatism which has remained the hallmark of the participatory process. Only rarely have I taken it upon myself to make unilateral decisions and in those cases I have had to account for my decision to the staff.

Tomorrow's Schools and Democratic Decision-making

In the previous discussion I have alluded to two tensions in attempting to

develop democratic decision-making within the present school system. The first concerned the view that it was difficult to promote participation within a system of pay and status rewards which was hierarchical. The second concerned the legal status of the principal. Under *Tomorrow's Schools* these possible tensions remain: the legal responsibility for a school is still invested in the principal. But there are other tensions, not new but which are reproduced under *Tomorrow's Schools*. For example, ideally in a democratic school all members of the school community, students, parents, staff, should have a say in how rewards and positions of responsibility, if any, are distributed. However, if the legal requirement of the principal is one potential obstacle to this, then so is the position of the teachers' union, the PPTA. For there is an obviously necessary requirement that work conditions for teachers be determined nationally. It is a necessary requirement because without it teachers would not retain the solidarity needed to press their case. If every school had different work conditions, collective action would be difficult to take, if not impossible. Yet the current hierarchical work conditions they are defending militate against greater democracy in schools. In other words, the major structures of our society are geared towards hierarchy.

These conditions pose problems for democratic schooling and they have the effect of perpetuating a hidden curriculum which asserts that hierarchies are 'natural'. Nevertheless, they do not spell the end of democratic schooling, rather they merely limit it. As I have suggested in this chapter there are reasons to do with intrinsic job satisfaction and empowerment which continue to make some form of democratic schooling possible under the present conditions. However, it should be emphasized that insofar as democratic schooling can be developed at Hagley, it is dependent upon the goodwill of teachers. If that goodwill is undermined, as it has been in many schools in the UK, then democratic schooling under the present conditions will become impossible.

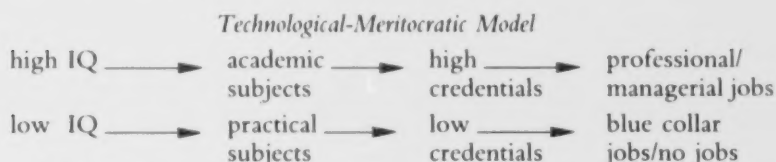
If this sounds like a pessimistic note on which to finish, it should not be taken as such; the recent history of Hagley points towards a more optimistic future. In 1984 Hagley was confronted by a Conservative Minister of Education who saw little value in the innovative nature of the education being offered at the school. In the face of protest the school was not closed down by him but was to be consigned to a slow death — through the expedient of taking away its zoned catchment area and with it the guaranteed students which would ensure its survival. In a sense the strategy could be seen as a forerunner to New Right policies which aim to increase competition between schools by dezoning. In Hagley's case dezoning had the opposite effect to that intended by the Minister: far from being closed down through lack of numbers the school has thrived. Paradoxically, the innovative policies which are being developed at Hagley have met the most stringent tests of the so-called, free market, although the school's philosophy and practice are opposed to those of the free market!

Public Examinations and the Structuring of Inequality: A Case Study

David Hughes and Hugh Lauder

Introduction

Questions about educational assessment and certification have typically been taken to be merely technical matters in which the prime aim is to link intellectual ability to jobs. More specifically, it has been assumed by the dominant technological-meritocratic paradigm that there is a linkage between intelligence, subject choice, academic credentials and suitability for particular occupations.¹ We can represent this model as follows:



Here it is assumed that 'intelligent' people will choose or be directed into taking subjects such as the physical sciences, mathematics and foreign languages which are deemed to be 'difficult' and 'demanding'. The 'less intelligent' people will take the 'less demanding' subjects such as home economics, typing and woodwork. It is further assumed that proficiency in the 'difficult' subjects reflects a more general ability to engage successfully in professional and managerial work so that restricting entry to the prestigious and highly paid jobs to those with high credentials is a rational process. Underlying this model is a belief that we live in or are moving toward a near meritocracy where credentials are the major criteria by which individuals are chosen for professional and managerial work. The problem of assessment is one of perfecting the instruments by which credentials are awarded so that they accurately and fairly reflect ability.

However, more recently this view has come under sustained critique.

It has been shown that even when IQ scores have been taken into account social origins play a significant part in social destinations (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Jencks *et al.*, 1979; Halsey, Heath and Ridge, 1980; Lauder, Hughes and Taberner, 1985; Hughes and Lauder, 1988).² As a consequence of this finding many researchers in the sociology of education have turned to theories concerning the nature of capitalist work and class culture to explain why students from blue collar backgrounds remain 'disadvantaged', with respect to destinations, relative to their counterparts from professional and managerial backgrounds (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Kohn, 1977; Kohn and Schooler, 1983; Willis, 1977; Connell, Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett, 1982; Brown, 1987; Walker, 1988).³ While there are clearly difficulties with some kinds of class-cultural explanation for blue collar disadvantage, which we shall discuss later, the problematic provides a potentially powerful analysis of the systematic distribution of advantage and disadvantage in our society. However, we need to register two caveats. Firstly, the explanation for disadvantage in class-cultural terms is a plausible inference from the observation that social background plays a significant role in destinations even when IQ is taken into account, but to our knowledge there have been until now no studies of the class context of educational and career decision-making that have used IQ as a variable in the research design. In other words, it has not been directly *shown* that observed class differences in educational decision-making are causally related to educational and career outcomes. Although, given the strength of the circumstantial evidence, we consider this possibility most likely. Indeed, to support class-cultural explanations for educational and subsequent disadvantage we shall report on evidence from our Christchurch School Leavers Study which takes IQ into account.

Secondly, the causal sense in which class-culture may be said to 'explain' disadvantage needs to be clarified. In our view the term should not be used in a Humean causal sense, rather class cultural explanations should be seen as determining the limits and possibilities to educational and career decision-making. This is because our own research suggests that those blue collar students with high IQs are most likely to achieve clerical and office destinations while their counterparts with lower IQs are likely to end up in blue collar work. IQ does make a difference to educational and career decision-making and subsequent destinations, but a class-cultural explanation would hypothesize that the decision-making of working class youths is quite different from that of youths from the professional and managerial classes with similar IQs.

If this is the case, and we shall argue that it is, then the technological-meritocratic model needs to be reconsidered because far from reflecting purely rational and technical interests it may obscure the logic by which systematic advantages and disadvantages are distributed precisely because it fails to take into account the influence of class conflict and the struggle it engenders over educational production and the resources it creates.

These considerations give credence to the possibility that instead of

examinations and assessment playing a significant role in an essentially rational process of selection and differentiation they are in fact used to regulate social conflict and legitimize the power and advantage of some groups over others (Broadfoot, 1984). In this chapter we want to explore the possibility that this latter conflict view of examinations and assessment provides the best way of understanding the nature of the New Zealand examination system. In particular we shall argue that when the means by which pass and failure rates are determined in the examination system are combined with the class determined nature of educational decision-making, the examination system serves to disadvantage students from blue collar backgrounds. In order to develop our case we shall draw on both quantitative and qualitative data from the 1982 Christchurch School Leavers Study.

Background to the Christchurch School Leavers Study

The data for this chapter came from phases 1 and 2 of the Christchurch School Leavers Study (Lauder and Hughes, 1988). In phase 1 data were gathered on those pupils who left school from twenty Christchurch secondary schools in 1982. Amongst other things information was collected on family SES and pupil performance in the secondary examinations, such as School Certificate (SC) and Sixth Form Certificate (SFC). SES was measured using the Elley/Irving and Irving/Elley scales (Elley and Irving, 1976; Irving and Elley, 1977) modified to include a seventh category which covered people not in receipt of a wage such as those on unemployment or domestic purposes benefits. As a working definition we have chosen to call categories 4-7 working class. In terms of occupational categories the Elley-Irving scale can be described in the following way:

Table 10.1 Occupational categories equating to the different levels on the Elley-Irving scale

SES	Occupational category
1	Professional
2	Managerial, business
3	Office, sales, technical, farmer
4	Skilled trades
5	Semi-skilled
6	Unskilled
7	Unwaged

In phase 2 of the research a stratified sub-sample of the 1982 school leavers population is being interviewed in depth in an effort to illuminate the phase 1 data. More specifically, we have been concerned to identify the nature of educational and career decision-making in relation to SES and IQ,

which has led to the general quantitative patterns of inequality identified from the phase 1 sample.

The official Department of Education statistics do not include information on examination success broken down by SES background. However, using the phase 1 data we are able to show that the examination system operates against working class students by disproportionately awarding them low school qualifications. Then using the phase 2 data we are able to illuminate the class differences in examination success by showing some of the processes through which educational decision-making occurs.

The Overall Examination Performance of Working Class Pupils

In an effort to place secondary school examination success on a continuum from no formal qualifications attempted to university scholarship, a 17-point scale was devised. The end points were defined as 1 'did not attempt any examinations' and 17 'attained a university scholarship'. The middle range of the scale includes students who have various qualifications such as School Certificate and Sixth Form Certificate. The full scale is: 1 'did not attempt any examinations'; 2 'no examination passes'; 3-11 '1-9 SC or SC and SFC passes'; 12 'UE by sitting'; 13 'UE by accrediting'; 14 'HSC'; 15 'B Bursary'; 16 'A Bursary'; 17 'Scholarship'.

Table 10.2, which presents the achievement distribution of the 2753

Table 10.2 School achievement by SES

Achievement	SES						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	11	7	8	2	1		
16	55	50	34	21	8	3	5
15	55	66	58	38	5	7	6
14	42	42	60	24	8	4	3
13	47	111	137	118	39	20	15
12	7	27	37	27	7	2	
11	4	10	28	23	6	4	3
10	15	23	28	22	11	5	3
9	2	16	20	19	9	5	4
8		12	16	18	3	5	1
7	7	18	30	29	9	8	7
6	3	12	30	35	15	15	2
5	3	20	24	39	15	10	3
4	4	11	29	40	7	8	6
3	2	15	28	40	21	11	5
2	2	45	65	68	34	29	10
1	5	33	51	116	69	80	53
N	264	518	683	679	267	216	126

pupils from phase 1 by pupil SES, reveals marked differences. Using these data it is a simple matter to calculate various figures to illustrate the differences between SES groups. For example, while working class children comprise 47 per cent of the sample, they attain only 22 per cent of the bursaries and scholarships and make up 78 per cent of those who leave school without even attempting School Certificate. Again, while 82 per cent of those in SES category 1 have UE or better, only 17 per cent of those in SES category 6 have reached UE level. Fifty-one per cent of the SES category 6 pupils compared with only 3 per cent of SES category 1 pupils leave school without qualifications.

The School Certificate Examination

In an effort to understand the overall performance of working class pupils in the examination system we shall now look in some detail at the School Certificate examination. SC is a major hurdle for working class children with 36 per cent of the phase 1 sample being completely unsuccessful at it. Within the working class 50 per cent of those from unskilled and unwaged homes leave school without qualifications. SC has been officially scaled since 1975 and to understand SC it is necessary to understand the scaling procedures.

The Background to the Current School Certificate System

School Certificate Prior to 1968

Up to and including 1967 the SC examination was attempted in English and at least three but not more than four other subjects. The candidates passed if their aggregates in English and their best three other subjects were 200 or more with the proviso that marks below thirty in any subject could not be included in the aggregate. Little attention was given to the question of subject difficulty. English was compulsory and there were restrictions on the choice of subjects which prevented candidates picking out a set of 'easy' options. No need was felt for formal scaling of the subjects although there were no doubt some differences in the means for the various subjects.

School Certificate from 1968 to 1985

In 1968 SC was changed to a single subject pass system with candidates able to enter from one to six subjects. At the same time control of SC passed to the newly created School Certificate Examination Board (SCEB), an *ad hoc* body under the wing of the Department of Education. Subject difficulty

now became of great concern to the running of the examinations. The SCEB believed that it would be unfair if one pupil passed a couple of 'easy' options while an equally able pupil failed 'difficult' options. Between 1968 and 1974 an informal hierarchy of subjects developed, as may be seen in Table 10.3, although there was no official scaling. At the top in 1974 was Latin with a pass rate of 64.6 per cent and typewriting was bottom with a pass rate of 44.9 per cent.

In 1975 formal scaling of SC was introduced in complete secrecy to formalize and extend the hierarchy of subjects. Schools were not informed of this change in procedure until the SCEB's Newsletter No. 4 of May 1977. The way that scaling has operated since this time has been described elsewhere (Snook and St George, 1986; St George, 1985 and 1987) and only a brief outline will be given here.

The scripts in the various subjects are sent out to markers in batches of 300 per marker, which means there will be many markers in subjects with a large number of candidates. To take into account (i) differences in marker toughness; and (ii) the difficulty of the examination from year to year, each batch of scripts from a single marker is scaled to a mean of 52 and a standard deviation of 17. We would argue vigorously that these values, which are entirely based on historical precedent, lead to unsatisfactorily high failure rates in some subjects. However, if we take the norm-referenced aspect of SC as given, we would not want to criticize the general procedure because differences in marker toughness and paper difficulty undoubtedly exist and there are serious problems. However, scaling does not stop here. We now have an additional step in the procedure which attempts to take into account (iii) differences in the difficulty of the various SC subjects.

To accomplish the third kind of scaling all the candidates in their third year at high school and taking English and at least three other subjects are selected out and used to scale each subject against all others. This group is known as the NZY3E3 cohort. If as a group the NZY3E3 candidates taking a particular subject, for example chemistry, do well in the other subjects they take, their chemistry marks are scaled up. Conversely, if as a group the NZY3E3 candidates in another subject, for example woodwork, do relatively poorly in their other subjects, then their woodwork marks are scaled down.

Initially, in an effort to stop the marks in some subjects dropping through the floor, the minimum median was set at 47 and subjects falling below this were scaled back up to it. Since 1984 the minimum median has been raised to 50 for subjects attracting at least 1 per cent of the NZY3E3 cohort. But when the non-NZY3E3 candidates are slotted back into the distribution as the final step in the scaling process, the median in a particular subject can drop back below 50. This will happen if the subject attracts a significant number of non-NZY3E3 candidates who are typically in the lower half of the distribution. So, for example, home economics had a pass rate of only 44 per cent in 1985.

A look at Table 10.3 shows the results of these procedures. Over the period 1974–1985 the foreign languages and physical sciences hold pride of place. In 1985 their pass rates were all above 80 per cent. Bringing up the rear with pass rates below 50 per cent are typewriting, biological science, agriculture, engineering, clothing and textiles, woodwork and home economics.⁵ However, it is not just a matter of pass rates; the low pass rate subjects also miss out on high grades. For example, fewer than 1 per cent of candidates got A grades in clothing and textiles, home economics, typing and engineering in 1985, while over 10 per cent of those taking Latin, physical science, French and other foreign languages got A grades.

School Certificate Since 1985

In 1986 SC changed from a pass/fail system to a straight 7-grade letter system, with grades from A1 (high) through A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2 to D (low). Under this system it is no longer possible to talk of pass rates in the different subjects, but the system has not been fundamentally altered. We still have the scaling procedures described above and consequently we still have an unequal distribution of grades.

Differences in SC Participation Rates and Success Rates by SES

Table 10.4 shows the School Certificate participation rates and pass rates for third year pupils from the phase 1 sample by SES. It can be seen that the lower SES pupils attempt SC less frequently than their higher SES peers, take fewer subjects when they do sit and pass fewer of those papers they attempt. While 98.1 per cent of SES category 1 pupils sit SC, only 56.3 per cent of those from category 7 sit. The pupils from SES category 1 who sit SC take an average of 5.36 papers and pass 90.1 per cent of them, giving them a mean of 4.83 passes. On average the pupils from category 7 who sit SC pass only 61.3 per cent of the 4.83 papers attempted, giving them a mean of 2.96 passes.

Table 10.5 shows the percentage of pupils from the seven SES categories taking high pass rate and low pass rate subjects. The eight subject groupings from Table 10.3 with 1985 pass rates of 65 and above have been combined to form a high pass rate group, and the seven subject groupings with pass rates below 50 have been combined to form a low pass rate group. It can be seen that high SES pupils take high pass rate subjects much more often than the low SES pupils — this is especially so with foreign languages and the physical sciences. The low SES pupils take the low pass rate subjects more often than the high SES subjects.

If the pupils from each SES category took the same number of subjects for SC, the figures in Table 10.5 could be taken at face value, but they do

Table 10.3 SC pass rates by subject grouping, 1974-1985*

Subject grouping	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Latin	64.6	70.2	73.8	81.4	84.0	87.1	87.0	85.7	86.9	87.6	87.5	86.6
Other foreign languages	58.4	62.3	68.5	77.0	72.2	74.5	75.7	79.0	81.1	80.4	80.5	80.3
Physical science	57.2	61.0	66.6	68.8	72.8	70.4	75.7	79.0	80.0	81.6	83.1	80.2
French	56.4	64.0	66.9	75.9	75.8	77.4	77.6	79.2	81.6	83.4	82.9	83.0
History	55.6	56.3	56.3	57.4	47.5	58.3	57.2	59.0	62.9	60.0	62.8	65.0
English	55.2	55.8	52.8	51.2	50.8	51.0	51.1	50.8	50.6	50.8	52.4	52.7
Music	55.1	62.3	66.0	63.3	65.9	65.9	66.9	70.9	69.5	71.3	73.9	68.3
Art	53.5	57.1	53.4	55.9	53.6	54.6	49.5	51.5	50.1	53.8	54.4	58.9
Geography	53.3	53.8	55.8	50.8	49.9	50.3	50.2	52.6	52.1	52.1	53.4	55.2
Mathematics	52.5	54.3	55.7	55.3	54.8	53.4	52.5	57.0	57.5	56.2	57.9	59.6
Science	51.5	47.2	51.1	52.4	53.4	53.0	51.4	58.2	58.8	58.2	59.2	59.0
Shorthand/typing	50.9	49.9	53.6	61.8	61.1	65.9	64.9	61.5	64.8	63.7	67.0	66.1
Maori	49.4	47.0	43.6	44.5	43.4	43.9	39.1	39.9	41.9	37.3	53.1	54.4
Biological science	48.6	52.1	50.5	48.7	45.8	47.0	45.6	44.5	45.4	44.2	49.0	49.3
Bookkeeping/accounting	48.4	48.8	50.2	60.4	59.4	60.5	62.2	60.5	62.5	64.5	57.1	68.0
Woodwork	47.9	47.6	47.1	47.9	45.4	44.1	41.1	39.1	38.9	37.8	43.8	45.2
Clothing and textiles	47.7	50.3	49.3	52.2	51.5	51.5	48.9	38.5	37.2	38.5	45.4	44.4
Technical drawing	47.6	48.2	48.1	49.5	48.9	49.3	49.7	54.0	55.9	54.6	48.0	59.9
Engineering	47.1	45.5	46.4	46.8	45.5	46.4	42.7	41.5	42.4	41.5	47.5	48.0
Agriculture	46.3	46.4	45.2	48.5	42.8	43.3	47.9	44.1	45.4	44.0	47.0	48.8
Economics	46.0	46.4	46.8	49.2	49.2	48.9	49.2	53.5	55.1	55.3	57.7	57.7
Home economics	45.8	46.4	43.5	45.1	46.8	44.3	39.7	38.6	37.8	37.7	44.9	44.0
Typewriting	44.9	43.8	44.2	44.9	45.7	44.6	43.7	43.6	43.5	45.5	48.8	49.1
Total Pass Rate	52.3	52.8	53.1	52.9	52.6	52.3	51.7	53.9	54.3	54.0	56.4	57.2
	64.6	70.2	73.8	81.4	84.0	87.1	87.0	85.7	86.9	87.6	87.5	86.6
	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to
	44.9	43.8	43.5	44.5	42.8	43.3	39.1	38.5	37.2	37.3	43.8	44.0

*Adapted from Hughes (1983). For a number of reasons it was necessary to group some subjects together. So, for example, 'Physical science' includes chemistry, physics, physics (PSSC), electricity, applied mechanics and science physical. For full details of the subject groupings and an explanation of why grouping was necessary see Hughes (1983).

Public Examinations and the Structuring of Inequality

Table 10.4 School Certificate participation rates and pass rates by pupil SES

	SES Category						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Number	264	518	683	679	267	216	126
2 N sitting SC	259	482	625	551	195	135	71
3 $2/1 \times 100/1$	98.1	93.1	91.5	81.1	73.0	62.5	56.3
4 $\bar{X}$ papers sat	5.36	5.03	5.06	4.91	4.71	4.70	4.83
5 $\bar{X}$ papers passed	4.83	3.83	3.54	3.15	2.71	2.70	2.96
6 $5/4 \times 100/1$	90.1	76.1	70.0	64.2	57.5	57.4	61.3

Table 10.5 Percentage of pupils taking high and low pass rate subjects for SC by SES

	SES Category						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Number of high pass rate papers sat per 100 candidates	148.26	97.93	83.36	66.79	56.41	44.44	73.32
2 Number of low pass rate papers sat per 100 candidates	26.64	42.74	49.28	62.61	70.26	75.56	53.52
3 1 divided by 2	5.57	2.29	1.69	1.07	0.80	0.59	1.37

not. As we noted in Table 10.4, the SES category 1 pupils sit a mean of 5.36 papers while those in SES category 7 sit, on average, 4.83. This means that we would expect the high SES pupils to sit more papers in *all* categories if there were no differential selection of subjects according to SES. If we divide the high pass rate values by the low pass rate values in Table 10.5 as shown, we get a figure which controls for the absolute number of papers taken by each SES group. It can be seen that for every low pass rate paper taken by pupils from SES 1, 5.57 high pass rate papers are taken. There is a steady progression down to SES category 6 pupils who take only 0.59 papers from the high pass rate subjects for every low pass rate paper they sit. The category 7 pupils are the only ones to break the pattern, taking 1.37 high pass rate papers for each low pass rate paper taken.⁶

Competing Explanations for Differences in School Certificate Passes

In the preceding section we have shown that the difference in pass rates in SC between high and low SES pupils is a function of the differential number

of pupils who attempt the examination, the differential number of papers attempted and the different success rates in the papers sat. An adequate theory would need to explain each of these differences. On the technological-meritocratic model it would be claimed that working class pupils who lack ability act rationally by not attempting papers they know they are going to fail and they fail a larger proportion of the subjects they attempt because they disproportionately sit subjects which end up with high failure rates when scaling is applied. Because the scaling procedures are seen as necessary in the interests of fairness, the higher working class failure rate is also seen as just.

However, we believe that the evidence for such a view is weak and that the case against the technological-meritocratic model, from which it derives, is strong. We would therefore now like to argue the case against the technological-meritocratic model as it applies to SC in detail. In our view there are two elements which suggest that the differences shown are best considered as inequalities rather than merely differences as the technological-meritocratic model would have us believe. These concern the notion of justice which underlies the scaling procedures and the class context of educational decision-making.

Scaling and Equity

The present scaling system is based on the notion that equal ability and equal effort should result in equal marks irrespective of the subjects taken. The procedures used are designed to ensure that 'bright' pupils are not 'penalized' by taking 'difficult' subjects. Equity results when 'bright' students are successful whatever subjects they sit while 'dull' pupils fail. There are two related arguments against this view of equity. The first is centred on the dubious ability assumptions underlying scaling (Snook and St George, 1986). The second concerns the necessity of even considering ability as an ingredient in equity since there are alternative notions of equity which avoid the notion of ability altogether. For example, in 1956 a committee set up to review the post-primary curriculum and School Certificate examination (Department of Education, 1956) discussed the notion of equality as follows:

First we do *not* mean that all subjects require the same degree of general intelligence and scholastic ability or the same level of intellectual aptitude; nor do we mean that in any absolute sense all are of equal cultural value. We do believe, however, in the equal right of all children to develop best their own capacities, and we consider that those school studies that are best fitted to develop each different pupil are in this sense to be regarded of equal educational worth. Furthermore, we consider that all courses of study should require approximately equal efforts from the different groups of

children pursuing them, and that the standard of attainment demanded in each subject should be a good one, having regard for the abilities and needs of the pupils concerned.

Clearly if SC were operated on these principles, pass rate differences between subjects would largely disappear and working class pupils would pass much the same proportion of the papers they sit as other pupils. If working class pupils currently attempt fewer papers than pupils from professional and managerial homes because they know their chances of success are limited, they could be expected to attempt more papers once their chance of passing was increased. However, while we believe that changing to such a system is more equitable, it would not eradicate class differences completely because differences concerning subject and vocational choices would still exist. To understand why this is so we need to look at the class nature of educational and vocational decision-making.

Education and the Class Context of Decision-making

Previously we suggested that the dominant explanation for education inequalities espoused by sociologists of education in Britain and Australasia concerns the notion of class culture and the way it imposes limits and possibilities on educational and career decision-making. In particular it is the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, as exemplified by the research of Paul Willis, that has laid the foundations for such explanations. However, recently a number of commentators have criticized Willis' *Learning to Labour* for its overly romantic view of working class culture in that he suggests it provides the basis for a socialist transformation of capitalist society (Walker, 1986; Lauder, Freeman-Moir and Scott, 1986; Brown, 1988; Nash, 1987).

The task then remains of providing an account of the class nature of educational decision-making shorn of its romantic and idealist elements. A number of commentators have already started on this project (Gambetta, 1987; Brown, 1987; Moore, 1987 and 1988), while in New Zealand Nash (1987) has also sketched out some of the basic principles on which the logic of class decision-making in education might be understood. Nash (1987) describes the basic orientation to this approach as follows:

It is important to study how people strive to 'make the best' of their lives, how they try to get what they want with the resources they have. People possess different resources, and young people do so largely as a result of their families' location within the class system, and all of us necessarily act within what is at any moment a given distribution of positions that constitute 'opportunities' . . . We should accept also that in certain areas of life making a choice is perhaps typically a complex and continuing process in which options are

kept open then let go without much formal rational thought. An option may be dropped, making another more or less forced, for reasons that may remain unarticulated to oneself. (p. 96)

In this passage Nash touches on at least two and possibly three ways in which class determined 'decision-making' can occur. It is therefore a good place to begin to elaborate our own model of educational decision-making processes. Here we can join with Nash in suggesting that decisions are always context bound. Within a specific context people may consciously weigh up the costs and benefits of particular courses of action and choose the course they think will best advantage them. This is what Nash suggests in his opening sentences and it may be considered the paradigmatically 'rational' form of decision-making. One aspect of it worth noting is that it assumes that within a given context individuals understand the rules of the social game such that they can predict, to some degree, the outcomes to alternative courses of action. From the qualitative research we have undertaken we consider this to be a comparatively rare form of decision-making which is usually undertaken by those who consider breaking away from the collective knowledge or wisdom of the social group into which they are born. This brings us to the second kind of decision-making, intimated by Nash's final sentences, which is really a kind of non-decision-making where individuals simply follow the tacit collective wisdom of their group. To give an example, in our interviews with those from professional and managerial backgrounds, very few gave any thought as to why they were going to university — the decision was 'automatic' and can, in our view, only be explained by some notion of collective wisdom that university is both a natural and beneficial move.⁷ In contrast, it can be argued that one kind of working class collective wisdom is the instrumental view that the purpose of schooling is to enable entry to good working class jobs (Brown, 1987).⁸ Finally, there is a further kind of non-decision-making which is based on coincidence or luck and which is analogous to the progress of a pinball. In this kind of non-decision-making the rules of the educational game are poorly understood, even in terms of the interpretation a particular class places on them, and therefore the strategies devised in relation to the educational game are weak because goals are ill-defined and possible outcomes not considered.

So far we have been talking about various kinds of decision-making in the abstract. However, the class nature of decision-making is anchored in the development of classed identities which are formed in interaction with the structures and institutions of the family, school and labour markets. In this respect the notion of identity is crucial if we are to develop a sociology of decision-making which explains why some groups value different kinds of work in different ways, and either interpret similar goals differently or prefer different goals to other groups. What the concept of identity does is to ground the process of decision-making historically, thereby allowing us to explain why certain educational decisions are made and not others.⁹

By viewing the process of decision-making in an historical and social

way we are also able to ask to what extent the goals particular groups pursue are conditioned by the unequal exercise of power. In other words, we can lever up observed differences to look beneath the surface to see whether we are dealing with differences or inequalities based on differential access to power. This is a point to which we shall return when we raise the issue of whether the differences in School Certificate pass rates are merely differences or inequalities.

We now want to present an institutional field in which to locate the generation of actors' identities and the class career trajectories open to them, given that it is the processes of identity formation and reformation which determine why one route rather than another is taken at any given moment. In Figure 10.1 it is assumed that individuals' identities are formed through the process of interaction with the institutions of the family, peer group and school.

In Figure 10.1 it is hypothesized that the interaction between class, gender and racially structured families, youth subcultures and the content, structure and organization of the school will interact with perceptions regarding the

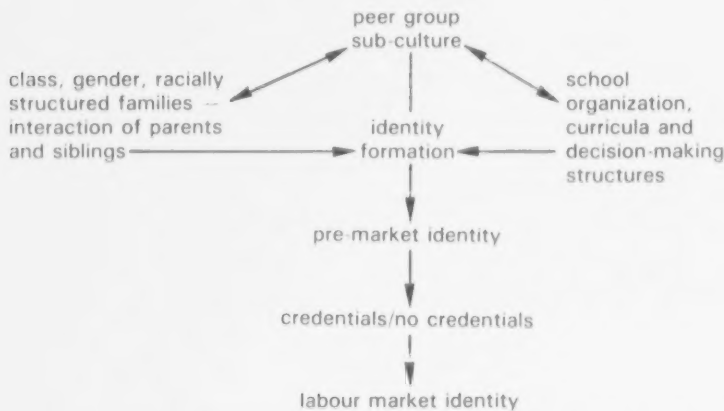


Figure 10.1 The formation of identities/decision-making within the community/education institution context

labour market to produce an individual's identity such that decisions or non-decisions will be made which determine the level of credentials achieved. Entry or failure to enter the labour market will then act so as to confirm or change the individual's identity.

In the above model there are no *a priori* assumptions as to how the institutions interact to produce specific identities and hence decisions. As such, there will be competing theories as to the effects particular relations between institutions have on structuring identity. For example, Hargreaves

(1967) and Lacey (1970) have argued that it is the organization of schooling, and in particular streaming, which generates alienation among working class students. In contrast Willis (1977) suggests that it is working class culture which generates alienation, and that school structures have little impact in mediating working class students' responses in school. Now Hammersley (1985) has argued that these different explanations for working class alienation in school should be treated as competing hypotheses and that with further testing it should be possible to decide which is refuted and which corroborated. However, this assumes that the effects of institutions can be determined independent of context and that in Hammersley's own terms these explanations should be treated as 'universal'.¹⁰ However, Brown (1987) argues on the basis of his ethnographic study of three secondary schools in South Wales that these hypotheses should not be seen as competing. Rather, in order to understand the behaviour of working class youth, we need to develop a model of the interaction of class cultures with school organizations. We would agree with Brown in arguing for an interactive model of the way educational identities and hence decisions and outcomes are produced. Although, in doing so, we would acknowledge that the causal influence of a particular institution may be stronger than others in particular cases. Our reasons for rejecting the idea that individual institutions can have universal effects and for espousing an interactive approach are best expressed in Moore's (1988) discussion of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977):

educational processes (whether defined through form or content) do not generate automatic effects (e.g., 'cool-out' the working class, 'feminize' girls, produce 'negative self-images' in black pupils). Their effects at any point in time are conditional upon the state of the entire system of relationships within which they are located . . . and mediated by both the dispositions acquired within the 'habitus' of the home and expectations held under a prevailing system of 'objective probabilities'. (p. 117)

In other words, we are arguing that this view should be used to generate a research heuristic which suggests that the formation of working class students' identities, responses and decisions will be a function of a complex set of relations within which the individual is positioned at any given time and as such we cannot determine why particular educational decisions are made in advance of historical analysis, field work and the generation of sub-theories such as those of Hargreaves, Lacey and Brown.

The above provides a theoretical background to our view of the class context of educational decision-making. We now want to put this model to work by looking briefly at some case studies from our Christchurch School Leavers Qualitative Sample, to illuminate the processes by which class in interaction with education structures working class educational decision-making, including that of subject choice, even when ability is taken into account.

The examples we have chosen below are those of able working class students who have not done as well as we might predict from their scholastic ability scores. While they have made various kinds of responses in their educational decision-making, they often show a lack of understanding of the rules and goals of the 'educational game'. For example, our study shows that many working class pupils do not select subjects with vocations in mind. Others do have an occupation in mind when they make their subject choices but they are restricted in their choice because they are equally restricted in what they consider viable jobs for them. Many of these pupils cannot envisage going to university and entering a profession, even though they consider professional people to be 'somebodies' when the kind of work they think of doing makes them feel like 'nobodies'. In other words there is a middle and professional class world which, conceptually, is beyond them. It is not surprising, therefore, that the subject choices they make reflect the world they inhabit. Some examples from our interview protocols will illustrate these points.

Jim was an able boy from a very deprived background. Despite the environmental handicaps he suffered he was dux of his working class primary school. Jim's choice of home economics at high school was almost serendipitous. He did it for a 'laugh' and 'because you could make biscuits to eat on the bus'. But he found he liked the subject, got good SC marks in it and decided to become a chef. Despite gaining four good SC passes and 120 handwritten letters to potential employers in the catering trade, he failed to get an apprenticeship and is now a storeman.

Shirley had no idea what to take for SC and talked to her mother and sister about what to do. It was clear that her family did not know much about the different options available and her choice was limited to what they could relate to. Her sister had done typing and Shirley was advised to do it too because 'it was just one of those subjects girls do'. She also did home economics and biology because she liked them. After a sixth form year she went nurse-aiding and at the time of the interview was hoping to be accepted for nursing.

Mary-Anne didn't know what she was going to be and stumbled on her present office position when she bumped into a family friend at the races at the end of her sixth-form year, during which she got university entrance with ease. However, she divided subjects up into those which she could see some point in and those she could not. She was very disparaging of anything she couldn't relate to her present job, and heaped scorn on the girls working with her who had to go to polytechnic to learn typing, saying of them 'they should have typed at school surely'. When it was pointed out that they might not have been interested at that stage she said, 'well that's stupid. They should have thought of that . . . They take French and history and geography — now what sort of job are they going to get with that? I don't understand it.'

Dave was able to choose four optional subjects in the junior school.

He chose, woodwork, engineering, technical drawing and economic studies because 'I knew it would be something that I did with my hands that I was going to be working at'. He then carried on in the subjects he did best in and after gaining UE left, as he had predicted, for an apprenticeship in fitting and turning.

Even when schools clearly do have an impact on the subject choice of their pupils in an effort to 'promote' able working class students, the logic of decision-making within this class structure ensures some perverse results. For example, Pam had been directed into foreign language options at high school because she was considered bright. However, she could see little point in taking languages and didn't enjoy them. She would rather have taken options like typing because she could see how it would lead to a job in an office, which is where she wanted to work. When it came to School Certificate she failed her language subjects and left school. She is now working at a check-out in a supermarket.

The students we have described above are examples of what Brown (1987) calls 'ordinary kids' who have made a tenuous accommodation to school. However, other students reject the school and become resisters. Geoff was such a resister and to demonstrate his rejection of the school and its values he staged a walk-out, with some of his friends, during the English SC exam and 'did wheelies in the playground' outside the exam room in a borrowed V8. Geoff undertook this protest even though it was he who told us that to be a professional person, a doctor or lawyer, was to be somebody. He is now a car groomer.

We now want to relate these cases of educational and career decision-making to the types of decision-making discussed previously. While the common wisdom of professional and managerial groups is to treat going to university as an automatic step, it is considerably more difficult to identify a single common wisdom as regards schooling for the working class. This is because schooling is problematic for the working class and it is therefore not surprising that it elicits a variety of responses from working class students. Our particular concern here is with able working class students who do not transcend their class position. Here it seems that two general possibilities are open to working class students: they can either accommodate in a tenuous way to the demands of schooling or they can resist them. Geoff is a clear example of someone who hated school and derived his identity from a conspicuous form of resistance. However, the other cases in our sample chose to accommodate to schooling. What is clear though is that for these students the kinds of decision-making we discussed in the abstract are ideal-types and that in practice they combined various kinds of decision-making and non-decision-making during the course of their educational careers.

For example, Dave is the only case where a consistently instrumental approach to schooling — which has often been taken to comprise *the* wisdom of the working class in relation to education — was taken. Mary-Anne had a strongly instrumental approach to school subjects but did not connect them

to a specific job or career. Jim's choice of school subjects and subsequent job searching activities were determined by chance, rather than with a specific job(s) in mind. Although once determined he did view school as a means to a job he thought he'd like. Similarly Shirley took the school subjects suggested by her sister and her school as being appropriate to her class and gender. Pam provides an interesting case of the interaction of class culture, gender and the organization of subject choices in her school producing a specific outcome. She had a clear idea of the subjects she wanted to do because she wanted to work in an office but because she was perceived as 'bright' by the school she was directed into a languages stream. Had students at the school been able to take a combination of office-related subjects and languages, Pam's career might have been quite different from the way it has now turned out.

The above examples of decision-making are, in our view, made within the context of the common wisdom of the working class. All of the above students had the potential to go to university, none of them considered it. Insofar as there is a rationality inherent in their choices, then the most unproblematic cases are those where schooling was used instrumentally to get a job. Now Willis (1977) argues that there is also a common working class wisdom inherent in the act of resistance because, in a certain sense, the lads in his study 'knew' that clerical jobs were as routinized and boring as manual labouring jobs. The same kind of reasoning could be applied to Geoff's actions. However, it may well be that acts of resistance are even more 'rational' today because the lengthening dole queues 'tell' working class students that now there is not even an instrumental point to schooling because there are no jobs. To make this point is to emphasize the situational nature of rationality: from a working class perspective resistance may be rational, from the perspective of the Minister of Employment it would be irrational. The more general point we would want to make is that working class culture should be seen as a set of resources (Lauder, Freeman-Moir and Scott, 1986; Brown, 1987) sufficiently complex to enable working class students either to accommodate to schooling or to resist it.

Conclusion

The question remains as to whether these working class responses to schooling should be seen merely as differences or as symptoms of fundamental inequalities in the distribution of power and wealth in our society. For if they are merely the differences one might expect in a pluralist society, the case against the New Zealand examination system as promoting forms of inequality and control over working class pupils is lost. Now the case against interpreting class differences as inequalities has recently been put by Murphy (1985) who argues that neither the Fabian nor neo-Marxist traditions in the sociology of education have *shown* that well documented disparities in

educational outcomes can be considered as inequalities. What would count for Murphy as evidence of inequality rather than disparity? He advances two criteria; the first, that there is 'evidence that those "excluded" or "dispossessed" actually wanted what they are excluded from or dispossessed of'. The second is that in structural explanations, such as those of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), the connection between objective conditions and the subjective expectations to which they give rise is empirically demonstrated.

As regards Murphy's first criterion the fact is that a significant sector of the working class in New Zealand, for example, Maori, has focused the campaign for equality and justice on the twin pillars of land rights and education. In other words, there has been an explicit demand for equality in education. However, such a demand is based on the view that there has been injustice done to Maori in the past. In effect there is a realist presumption operating which suggests that injustice can occur whether or not individuals are aware of it. In our view this is a crucial point because the dominance systems of class, gender and race largely operate effectively because people are unaware of the way unequal relations of power shape their lives. Lukes (1974) makes the point well when he says:

A may exercise power over B by getting him to do what he does not want to do, but he also exercises power over him by shaping or determining his very wants. Indeed, is it not the supreme exercise of power to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have — that is, to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires? (p. 23)

This brings us to Murphy's second criterion because clearly when objective structures determine subjective attitudes and wants we have a case of the kind described by Lukes. People going about their daily business do not normally reflect on the objective conditions which have determined the context for their aspirations. It is only through a theory of the historical development of objective structures that individuals could become critically reflexive of the way their attitudes and wants has been shaped. What is surprising is Murphy's claim that no evidence of the relationship between objective class structures and subjective aspirations has been developed. E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1968) is just such an endeavour, while in education the work of Brian Simon (1974) and more recently Gerald Grace (1987 and 1988), to name but two, has gone into some detail to show how the objective structures of class in relation to state education have impacted on working class aspirations and attitudes to education.

If it can be shown that working class decision making in education is a function of the unequal exercise of power, and in our view it can, then the differences we have documented are inequalities and they should be addressed.

While it has become a standard point amongst radical sociologists that

changes to education will not produce equality of opportunity, there are clearly changes to education that are required in order to help promote equity. Elsewhere one of us has argued for a democratic integrated curriculum (Lauder and Khan, 1988) in part to avoid the class tagged subject hierarchies we have documented in this paper. We have also argued for greater efforts to balance the social class intakes of schools because the social mix of schools has a significant impact on school outcomes (Lauder and Hughes, 1988). With respect to changes in assessment, space permits us to go no further than endorsing the general thrust of the various committees that have been set up to investigate the question of assessment (Educational Development Conference, 1974; Department of Education, 1976; Department of Education, 1986). In all these cases the general tenor of the recommendations has been towards unmoderated teacher assessment.

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Notes

- 1 In the sociological literature the technological-meritocratic model is frequently called the technological-functionalist model. Collins' classic (1971) paper provided the first major refutation of some of the central tenets of this theory.
- 2 It is worth noting that, 'Contrary to what Jencks *et al.* argued in *Inequality* (1972), background characteristics seem to exert appreciable effects both on occupational status and earnings even among men with the same test scores and education' (Jencks *et al.*, 1979, p. 10). We make this point because without this finding by Jencks the evidence for the point we are making here would have been less certain: Halsey, Heath and Ridge's (1980) view that social background makes a difference to destinations even when IQ is taken into account is based on an estimate of the role of IQ, while Bowles and Gintis's (1976) analysis has been called into question because their calculations were made by cobbling together different samples. (See note 7 for an insight into a class-logic explanation for Jencks *et al.*'s. (1972) inference that because brothers could end up in quite different destinations social background has little effect on destinations.)
- 3 We place 'disadvantage' in quotation marks to emphasize that disadvantage rather than difference needs to be established. We attempt to do this in the last section of the chapter.
- 4 There are further reasons for doubting the plausibility of the technological-meritocratic model — these concern the connection between credentials and jobs. See Moore (1986 and 1988) who rejects the implicit rationality attributed to the connection by neo-Marxist correspondence theorists and technological-meritocratic theorists and their counterparts in economics, neo-classical human capital theorists.

- 5 While relatively few people take Maori, its mean has been pegged to the English mean since 1984 in response to the outrage felt by the Maori community when it became public knowledge that Maori had one of the lowest pass rates of all the subject groupings in Table 10.3 with fewer than 40 per cent passing in some years. Given that 75 per cent of the candidates taking Maori are Maori, this outrage is hardly surprising. This change led to a massive increase in the Maori pass rate between 1983 when it was 37.3 per cent and 1984 when it jumped to 53.1 per cent. Other large changes in Table 10.3 such as the drop in clothing and textiles between 1980 and 1981 are also the result of alterations to the scaling rules.
- 6 The category of the unwaged could encompass a fairly heterogeneous grouping. However, most of the students in this category came from working class schools and it is, therefore, reasonable to assume that they come from relatively poor solo parent families or from families where the parents are unemployed.
- 7 The process of 'decision-making' for those from professional and managerial backgrounds should be compared to that of those 'able' students from working class backgrounds. For those from working class backgrounds who confront the possibility of going to university and then reject it a complex set of considerations is involved. In interviewing students from this group we have found that they have little knowledge of university and therefore reject it as a possibility for them. Ironically, underlying the rejection is a strong sense that they have to make it on their own and as such they aren't prepared to take the risk of going to university — instead they frequently choose to go to the polytechnic to take trade courses. In one interview the process of decision-making was made more complex by the fact that the interviewee's brother was already at university. In this case the interviewee didn't want to go to university in case he failed and was shown up by his successful brother. Insofar as this complex of reasons can be seen as producing his decision not to go to university we can explain in class logic terms what Jencks *et al.* (1972) put down to luck, namely why some brothers have quite different destinations from one another. For a discussion of working class caution with respect to educational decision-making see Gambetta (1987). In view of the model of educational decision-making we develop in this chapter, we should emphasize the family-school interaction which produced the decision in the above case. Although, as regards the school, it was more of a non-interaction in that it didn't provide him with the relevant information as regards university.
- 8 See our discussion later in this chapter as regards working class collective wisdom.
- 9 A more parsimonious approach to the question of decision-making which eschews reference to problematic constructs like 'identity' is taken by Boudon (1974). However, for reasons given in this chapter we think his parsimony is bought at the cost of developing a largely inaccurate model of educational decision-making. Moreover, our qualitative data suggest that the relatively poor performance of SES 2 students, relative to SES 1 students, can be explained, in part by the fact that many SES 2 students had parents who were upwardly mobile, although with working class views of education which influenced their children's decision-making. Clearly, this suggests that the determinants of educational decision-making are not solely economic as Boudon suggests. What, in effect, Boudon does is to explain educational decision-making in terms of ahistorical neo-classical economic man, although he provides a welcome

sophistication to that crude construct. Gambetta (1987) is prepared to go somewhat further down the road with Boudon than we would. However, Gambetta's reasoning for doing so is based, in part, on his rejection of Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) cultural capital model of reproduction. But his grounds for doing so are weak.

What Gambetta shows is that length of stay at school is not strongly related to parents' education. As a result he thinks that if we take parents' education as a proxy for cultural capital, then the relationship between parents' cultural capital and children's educational decision-making is weak. But this fails to take into account that collective working class wisdom is not static and that it does respond to changes in education, for example, credential inflation, although the view of schooling as enabling working class students to get good working class jobs remains unaltered. It is significant that he also found the relationship between parents' education and children's non-attendance at university to be stronger. The problem for both Boudon and Gambetta is that they make inferences about educational decision-making from quantitative rather than qualitative data. However, the significance of determining which is more plausible — a class-logic model of decision-making or Boudon's version of neo-classical economic 'rationality' — is crucial for policy purposes. Gambetta points out that Boudon's theory can have consequences quite consistent with what we would consider to be New Right initiatives, especially in terms of the income incentives necessary to attract working class students to university. However, from a class-logic perspective financial incentives are likely to have little effect. What is required is policies designed to reduce class inequalities.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that while we consider a class-logic form of explanation to provide the most plausible account of educational decision-making, we think, at least on some interpretations, Bourdieu's theory of reproduction to be too mechanistic. In this respect our position is much closer to that of Connell *et al.* (1982).

- 10 It should be noted that Hammersley develops his case on quite explicit empiricist grounds.

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Public Examinations and the Structuring of Inequality

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Illiteracy, Improper Literacy and the Development of an Underclass

Colin Lankshear

Introduction

To speak of an underclass is to speak of reproduced subordination at the bottom-most level of society and on a large scale: of a mass of people experiencing extreme disadvantage, privation and marginalization along (at least) economic, political and cultural lines, being reproduced from generation to generation. An underclass *endures*; it does not come and go in a generation or two. Those who *are* the underclass in a given generation are overwhelmingly the offspring of those who *were* the underclass in the previous generation. There is a growing belief among social and political theorists on the left in New Zealand that the emergence of a permanent underclass is highly likely given the process of economic restructuring currently underway — with its implications for (un)employment, a more extreme distribution of wealth and the withering away of the social wage.

My own view is that the foundations for a permanent underclass are already in place, and that what we will see over the next ten years is the consolidation, expansion and reproduction into its first undeniable cycle of a New Zealand underclass: unless, of course, we make fundamental shifts in economic and social policy and indeed, seek to change in major ways the very *structure* of our society.

The challenge that faces us immediately is to achieve a clearer understanding of the process and mechanisms by which subordination is socially produced and maintained, since the creation of a permanent underclass is merely the deepest manifestation of this process. It is precisely this challenge that requires us to consider what I call *improper literacy* along with illiteracy. I will argue that the social production of structured illiteracy is an inherent — although often misunderstood — part of the overall process by which an underclass is produced and perpetuated.

In addition, however, I will suggest that prevalent practices of reading and writing by those who *are* literate — practices of improper literacy —

play a crucial role in distorting our understanding of structured social relations, practices and processes, and their consequences for individuals and groups. The mass practice of improper literacy contributes much to maintaining and rationalizing social arrangements that give rise to patterned advantage and disadvantage: including that extreme development of patterned disadvantage which is the underclass.

Before turning to a more detailed discussion of illiteracy and improper literacy, a short account of what I understand by an underclass is in order, together with the comment that many of the ideas contained in later sections are developed in greater detail in the book, *Literacy, Schooling and Revolution* (Lankshear and Lawler, 1987).

Development of an Underclass

A first step in clarifying the idea of an underclass is to distinguish between identifying some of the empirical trappings of belonging to an underclass and attempting to describe what an underclass *is* in structural terms. The empirical trappings of location in an underclass are obvious enough. They include, for example, extreme economic hardship, inferior and insecure housing (ghetto tenancy), minimum educational experience and attainment, higher than average infant mortality rates and exposure to certain illnesses, inadequate nutrition, minimal access to health care, inflated likelihood of imprisonment and legal harassment, and so on. The features of ghetto lifestyle provide, perhaps, the quickest route to a broad description.

More important, however, is the attempt to describe what an underclass *is* in structural terms, since this will enable us to understand how it is that a whole segment of a population can be condemned to experience this disquality of life. We can begin by noting that on any 'radical' view of social class and class relations, class relations are power relations, and the various extant classes comprise a hierarchy from the most to the least powerful class.

If, for instance, we acknowledge three main classes within late capitalism, viz., capitalists/bourgeoisie, a 'new' middle class, and the working class,¹ we accept that economic power is greatest for capitalists, lesser for the 'new' middle class, and least for the working class. This systematically unequal distribution of economic power is rooted in the very *structure* or organization of economic life under capitalism.²

At the same time, cultural, political, race-ethnic and gender relations — which are *also* relations of power — are hierarchical. That is, given the way social life is structured within our society — through established practices, procedures, arrangements and relationships, which are rationalized, masked, or represented as normal or inevitable/natural by ideologies (which shape our beliefs, attitudes, expectations, etc.) — hierarchies of political, cultural, race-ethnic and gender power are evident within daily routines. Countless studies attest to the cultural dominance of bourgeois and middle

class 'habitus' over that of the working class within school.³ White ethnicity enjoys institutionalized supremacy over black and/or migrant ethnicity. And the power relations of patriarchy are well documented. In each case the (systematic) differentials in power are grounded in the very *structure* of our society.⁴

There is, of course, a deep and long-standing debate as to precisely how structured differentials in power along political, race-cultural and gender lines are related to the structuring of *economic* power under capitalism.⁵ This question touches us in two main ways here. First, available evidence suggests a powerful link between race ethnicity and the likelihood of inhabiting an underclass. Second, as a theoretical construct encapsulating the idea of extreme marginalization being reproduced on a large scale and along several dimensions (especially economic, political and cultural), the notion of an *underclass* gets much of its bite from the assumption that political and cultural marginality are strongly conditioned by the structuring of economic power. Let us take these in turn.

In their seminal study *Adult Illiteracy in the United States* (1978), Hunter and Harman claim that their experience and research affirm a great overlap between being undereducated and/or illiterate and belonging to groups that 'by virtue of their social, economic, cultural or ethnic condition could be expected to suffer more deprivation than the rest of society' (p. 36). These latter groups include 'the poor, the imprisoned, the unemployed or those employed at a low level, and the racially . . . oppressed' (p. 36).

According to Hunter and Harman

(t)hose who are poor are likely not to have finished high school. Blacks and ethnic minorities make up a disproportionate number of the poor and unemployed . . . We have come to understand that the undereducated are also primarily the poor and racial and ethnic minorities. (p. 36)

Hunter and Harman do not speak explicitly of an (American) *underclass*. They do, however, synthesize data showing beyond doubt that race and ethnic minorities are disproportionately present at the very bottom levels of income, educational attainment, 'employability' and so on. They speak of disturbing interrelationships among poverty, education and racial-ethnic origin being revealed in available statistics.

We can safely conclude from their study that whatever else we are talking about when referring to the existence of an underclass in the US, we are talking about a group populated by race-ethnic minorities way out of proportion to their numerical presence in the population as a whole. Given the broad structural similarities between US and New Zealand society, there is every reason to expect the same general patterns to be evident here, and no reason to doubt it. The only question is whether we are as yet entitled to speak of an *established underclass* existing in New Zealand — as we clearly are in the US case. If not, the time cannot be far off.

We do not have to settle the vexed question of the causal relationship between economic and race-ethnic subordination to elaborate the idea of an underclass as a *structural phenomenon*. It is sufficient to recognize that being economically marginalized and deprived in the extreme will inevitably compound and intensify a group's political and cultural powerlessness. The point we must focus on now is the role of the prefix 'under' within the noun 'underclass'. This can be done by contrasting 'working class' with 'underclass'.

While to be working class is to be subordinate within social class relations, it is nevertheless to exist *inside* the relations and institutions of capitalist society. In economic terms, the working class enjoys some degree of economic power — for example, through trade unions and bargaining procedures, through the possibility of withholding labour to effect, and the practice of working to rule, etc.⁶ A regular wage confers some power to consume and a degree of economic security: the more so that margins of mental or manual skill, penal rates and other relativities result in wages above mere subsistence level. In political terms, to be working class offers traditional structures and opportunities for participating in political life and exercising political power — within the labour movement, the myriad socialist parties, the Labour Party, etc. There is also the possibility for a clear sense of political purpose among working people, in that issues relating to employment, work conditions, purchasing power, etc. are among the key political issues.⁷ This is not merely a formal or theoretical possibility. Many workers, even today, actually *do* exercise political power and participate in mainstream political life — albeit from a position of inferior power to that enjoyed by representatives of ruling and middle class interests.⁸ In cultural terms, to be a worker is to enjoy some reasonably well-defined cultural identity or other. There are well-defined cultural traditions and expressions, interests and pursuits, organizations and associations, attached to various locations within the working order.⁹ While it is true that working class experience and traditions are marginalized within social institutions like education/school by comparison with those of more powerful classes, they are nonetheless there. While woodwork and typing enjoy markedly lower subject status than science, maths and English literature, they *do* find presence in the curriculum. School texts *do* submerge working class history and the labour movement, and do largely ignore the existence of a working class as such,¹⁰ but the fact remains that this charge *can* be laid.

There is a cultural identity and an exercising of cultural power evident in the world that can be said to have been overlooked, distorted, or down played within the official knowledge and values of school. To be working class is to get a shot at a wage, at schooling, at a coherent identity based upon institutional fulfilment of the human capacity for labour, at the possibility — albeit inferior by comparison with the chances of the ruling class — of usurping economic, political, cultural and educational 'capital'.¹¹

The underclass, however, exists to a large degree *outside and beneath* the social relations of capital: as victims of permanent structural employment,

heightened casualization of work, or having been otherwise pushed to the periphery and beyond of mainstream economic life.¹² Denied (even) the forms and measures of identity, participation and power available to the lower echelons of the working class within economic, political, cultural and other social structures, inhabitants of an underclass are systematically excluded from access to those 'capitals' that might enable them as individuals to 'get out from under'. This almost wholesale exclusion from the relations and institutions of capitalist society explains why the chances of someone born into an underclass remaining there, and their children after them, are almost perfect:¹³ whilst the possibility of upward mobility exists for at least a (small) proportion of children born into the working class. The crucial points to note here are:

- (i) that the emergence and reproduction of an underclass is inevitable under conditions of permanent structural unemployment, where economic and social policies withhold an effective social wage, and where institutionalized values, processes, procedures, relationships, and ideologies reflect the logic of a social structure from which an entire stratum of the population is estranged;
- (ii) that the underclass is reproduced generationally in a 'strong' sense — being added to, perhaps, over time by those pushed downward from other classes by escalated unemployment, or by a range of more or less personal conditions (for example, drug addiction, abandonment, mental or physical health disorders, criminal conviction, etc.) that are not ameliorated by relevant forms of social provision.

So much in general terms for the description of an underclass as a structural phenomenon. What now of the relationship between illiteracy and the development and reproduction of an underclass?

Illiteracy and the Development of an Underclass: The Social Production of Structured Illiteracy

I will address five questions in this section.

- 1 What counts as being illiterate?
- 2 How extensive is illiteracy?
- 3 How is illiteracy distributed throughout a population? Is it more or less random, or are there definite patterns?
- 4 If illiteracy is patterned, how are these patterns to be understood and explained?
- 5 Does understanding the distribution of illiteracy help us to understand how an underclass develops?

There is no single definitive measure of illiteracy other, perhaps, than *absolute* incompetence with print. This standard, however, is useless within a sophisticated print society where the minimum requirements for being functional are increasing all the time. The only attempt known to me to guesstimate the extent of illiteracy in New Zealand took a reading age of 9½ years on standardized PAT reading tests as the top line for being illiterate. The rationale for this was that a reading age of 10 years was regarded as the minimum necessary to sustain independent reading.¹⁴

In the US, where the most extensive research in the English speaking world has been done on adult illiteracy, a range of criteria and standards has been employed — including length of school attendance! Probably the most rigorous and empirically grounded 'definition' is that developed by the Adult Performance Level Study (APL).¹⁵ This is a measure of *functional* (il)literacy. Adopting this functional type of approach to defining illiteracy, Kozol (1985) argues that in the US 'the illiterate' should be identified as those who read at 'less than a ninth grade level' (p. 10). The point of this standard becomes evident when reading *levels* are couched in empirical terms. In Kozol's words:

It requires ninth grade competence to understand the antidote instructions on a bottle of corrosive kitchen lye, tenth grade competence to understand instructions on a federal income tax return, twelfth grade competence to read a life insurance form. Employment qualifications for all but a handful of domestic jobs begin at ninth grade level. (p. 10)

The approach adopted by APL and Kozol entails, of course, that any recognized (functional) measure for illiteracy will not remain static. It will rise as the minimum requirements for functionality within society rise. One US expert has claimed 'that anyone who does not have at least a twelfth grade reading, writing and calculating level will be absolutely lost' by the 1990s.

We are faced with two broad options in establishing a meaningful criterion for determining what counts as being illiterate relative to the demands of New Zealand print communication at the present time. We can either assume that our average print requirements are comparable with those in the US and effect a rough translation of, say, ninth or tenth grade level. Alternatively, we could undertake a comparable kind of research to that done by APL. At the least we can say that given something like the standard embraced by Kozol, the criterion of a 9½-year-old reading level would be on the light side — a comment compatible with statements made at the time by those associated with the New Zealand study.¹⁶

This study was undertaken by NZCAE personnel in 1987. They offered a cautious estimate of the extent of adult illiteracy at the time, claiming 'the probability is that there are between 50,000 and 100,000 adult New Zealanders reading at or below the level of the average 9½-year-old'.¹⁷

Given a total population of around 2 million aged 15 and over at the time, these figures represent an illiteracy rate of barely 5 per cent. In radical contrast to this, the more demanding standard employed by Kozol (1985) yields an estimate of 60 million illiterate US adults, or one-third of their total adult population! This figure comprises 25 million adults 'reading either not at all or at less than a fifth grade level', and a further 35 million 'reading at less than a ninth grade level'. Both Carmen Hunter and the APL researchers agree that these are conservative figures (Kozol, 1985).

Even allowing for important differences between US and New Zealand society, the vast discrepancy between the criteria for illiteracy employed there and here, the resultant dramatic difference in the measured rates of illiteracy, and the fact that the extent of illiteracy in New Zealand has not been given any serious research attention by appropriate bodies,¹⁸ makes me want to ask whether our educational and social responsibilities have been properly discharged in this area. On the other hand, the only ultimate justification for undertaking systematic and detailed research into a phenomenon that generates tremendous personal angst and which many individuals go to great length to conceal,¹⁹ would be if our society were prepared to take the steps necessary to create and maintain universal literacy. As my argument will suggest, it is doubtful that any such guarantee would be forthcoming. Nevertheless, we must pursue it.

We come now to the question of how illiteracy is distributed. This question has barely been addressed in New Zealand to date. It has, however, been taken up seriously in the US. On the basis of exhaustive surveys, Hunter and Harman (1978) conclude that persons lacking sufficient reading and writing skills to function effectively in mainstream American society:

are found in large numbers wherever there are poor people and wherever there are congregated racial and ethnic minority groups. They are found in city ghettos and doing hard physical labour on unmechanized farms. (p. 31)

Kozol (1985) notes that while white native born Americans comprise the largest single group of illiterate adults, the figures in proportion to population are *very much higher* for blacks and Hispanics than for whites. Whereas 16 per cent of white US adults are functional or marginal illiterates, the rate is 44 per cent and 56 per cent for black and Hispanic citizens respectively. Moreover, the proportion among younger generation blacks is increasing rapidly, with 47 per cent of all 17-year-old blacks being functionally illiterate and the figure expected to reach 50 per cent by 1990. Kozol also provides a crude but suggestive basis for affirming Hunter and Harman's claim of the strong correlation between illiteracy and social class subordination. By Kozol's (1985) reckoning:

(h)alf the heads of households classified below the poverty line by federal standards cannot read an eighth grade book. Over one-third

of mothers who receive support from welfare are functionally illiterate. Of 8 million unemployed adults, 4-6 million lack the skills to be retrained for hi-tech jobs. (p. 5)

Historians tell us that there is nothing new in the fact of patterned illiteracy. By whatever standards or criteria, of illiteracy rates for Britain and the US last century Tyack (1976) says that:

the aggregated data . . . mask very important variations in (school) attendance and literacy by region (the South lagged far behind the rest of the nation); by ethnicity (commonly forbidden to read under slavery, blacks were 90% illiterate in 1870; and foreign born adults were considerably less literate than native-born); and by other factors such as social class and urban or rural residence. (pp. 360-1)

This historical perspective will be helpful when we turn to explaining patterned illiteracy.

A comment on the New Zealand scene is called for here. For it might be asked what relevance the demonstrated patterning of illiteracy in the US has for New Zealand given that the question of patterned illiteracy has scarcely been raised, let alone studied in any depth here. The short reply is that were the question to be researched in New Zealand, *we should confidently expect* to find significant patterns of adult illiteracy existing along (at least) social class and race-ethnic lines. And indeed there are *some* local data available which point strongly in the direction of patterned illiteracy by race-ethnicity and class. These relate to young persons in the Access training programmes for unemployed youth. As typical examples, consider figures for September and November 1987 and January 1988:

September 1987

Ethnic status	Trainees with language/literacy problems		
	Female	Male	Total
European	416	654	1070
Maori	926	1070	1996
Pacific Islander	287	348	635
Others	62	51	113
			3814 or 45.8 per cent of total trainees

These data are consistent with considerable research evidence relating patterns of general scholastic attainment to class and race-ethnicity.²⁰ Why should we expect the case to be different for literacy?

Illiteracy, Improper Literacy and the Development of an Underclass

November 1987

Ethnic status	Trainees with language/literacy problems		
	Female	Male	Total
European	516	875	1391
Maori	1169	1415	2584
Pacific Islander	313	433	746
Others	68	67	135
			4856 or 48.2 per cent of total trainees

January 1988

Ethnic status	Trainees with language/literacy problems		
	Female	Male	Total
European	368	694	1062
Maori	1046	1354	2400
Pacific Islander	241	253	495
Others	34	31	65
			4022 or 48.2 per cent of total trainees

(figures provided by the Labour Department, 1988)

Given the patterning of adult illiteracy, how are the patterns to be understood and explained? I suggested earlier that Tyack's retrospective comment may be helpful here. What it does is suggest that there may be important *structural* factors contributing to the patterning of illiteracy: patterned illiteracy may be grounded to an important extent in tendencies, practices, processes, mechanisms, etc. inherent in the social structure, rather than, say, in alleged traits, attributes, general characteristics of individuals or groups themselves.²¹ For example, to the extent that nineteenth century illiteracy rates for negroes can be accounted for by the social institution of slavery within which reading was forbidden, we have an overt instance of illiteracy flowing directly from structured social practices. Likewise, decisions and policies made last century within the structures of US economic and political life created a demand for migrant labour. This presents a further dimension along which a story might be told as to how patterns of illiteracy reflect considerably the *structuring* of daily life in nineteenth century America. I elaborate a tentative, first-shot account of structural origins of patterned

illiteracy in *Literacy, Schooling and Revolution*.²² Limitations on time and space permit only a brief synopsis of that attempt here. The general idea should become clear enough, however.

We may begin with aspects of the economic structuring of society. Economic life is organized around relations, practices and policies which produce markedly different outcomes in personal economic destinies. The fact that some work pays (very) well while other work pays (very) badly or not at all, that a level (possibly high) of permanent unemployment may characterize national economies for generations, or that increasing numbers of people face the prospect of intermittent/casualized labour for the foreseeable future, etc. reflects the way a society's economic life is structured. This structuring in turn reflects the unequal distribution of power within the logic of capitalist production itself, as well as within channels of economic decision-making, within political institutions and so on. We should, then, see the experience of mass unemployment and economic insecurity, or the reality of large numbers of families earning below official poverty levels, as *socially produced structural outcomes*, together with the further outcomes generated by these conditions — including the classic trappings of life inside an underclass.

Next, consider some of the ways education itself is structured within our society.

- (a) Educational activity/practice has been increasingly identified with and monopolized by schooling during this century. School is portrayed and accepted as *the* agency which educates. Consequently it is the case for many people that if they fail to acquire educational skills (including literacy skills) within school, then they do not acquire them at all.
- (b) Policies governing school funding and control can and do contribute to great divergence in what we might call the 'quality' of schools from one suburb/area to another. The US experience suggests that these differences may increase markedly if our present government enacts policies of devolution without ensuring the provision of the full range of resources in areas of scarcity.
- (c) School practice is structured around a particular and narrow selection of pursuits and values. The curriculum, for instance, draws on but a tiny sample of the endless variety of activities potentially available. Moreover, within the curriculum offerings themselves some subjects enjoy higher status than others. The hierarchy and, indeed, the original selection of 'worthwhile activities' are seen by many writers as reflecting the cultural dominance of particular groups over others within education. A large literature now exists which points squarely to school practice and its underlying values as reflecting the greater power of some groups than others to influence the character of schooling. The education shaped by these elites — through their disproportionate involvement in policy-making, superior articulation (relative to institutional 'style'), appreciation of how best to lobby

and make submissions (having the time and emotional wherewithal to lobby and submit), connections with official power, influence on or over school boards, and the fact that *their* voices tend to be heard and heeded — reflects their particular values, attitudes and concerns.

One well-documented response to the experience of school culture and style as alien by youth from subordinate groups is systematic resistance (a form of cultural counter-expression). The almost inevitable outcome of resistance is, of course, educational failure.²³

Finally, the social practice of selecting employees is structured tightly around reference to school attendance and performance. The significance of school as society's credentialing agency can, however, produce some twists. Instead of valuing school as the established route to a desirable or viable future, some groups may come to disvalue schooling, sensing that it is an institutionalized (and, hence, legitimating) route to failure. For example, Hunter and Harman note that groups at the bottom of the social and economic heap in the US last century were led to believe that literacy and other educational attainments would enhance their life opportunities. But as the number of people within these groups gaining credentials increased, so too did the level of qualifications demanded for the same jobs:

Each time competing ethnic minorities reached the educational levels they had been told would lead to economic success and prestige, the game rules were changed . . . (Given) the resulting inflation of educational credentials . . . disillusionment is likely among those who purchase those credentials through school attendance when the promised pay-off fails to materialise. The disappointed groups may drop out of the difficult process of schooling. (Hunter and Harman, 1978, p. 19)

I want to suggest that out of such elements as these we can begin to see how patterned illiteracy may largely originate within the structures of daily life. To this extent patterned illiteracy should be identified as a *symptom* of the unequal distribution of power within social structures, and the social structures and the social production of structured illiteracy be recognized as part of the wider process of socially produced and maintained subordination.

It is necessary to elaborate this view a little. Let us follow a chain of perfectly plausible outcomes (at the level of daily life) arising from the elements of structured practice identified above.²⁴

Imagine a neighbourhood or community that has experienced high levels of unemployment for some time and where the prospects are for this to continue, or even intensify;²⁵ where the incomes of locals who actually *are* employed are generally very low; where the need for both parents to seek work results in older children being encouraged (or required) to mind younger

siblings during the day, and where older children may also be encouraged to find casual work after the school day (i.e. in 'homework time') to supplement the family income; where insecure tenancy and/or escalating rents result in the regular shifts within and without the neighbourhood, making for disrupted schooling; where poor nutrition, inadequate clothing, inferior sanitation, etc. make for regular health disorders among the children of the area. The fact that many inhabitants view school as a dead end and/or as culturally alien and hostile encourages high levels of disruption within the classroom. This creates stress problems for teachers, adding high teacher turnover to an otherwise underresourced school. Many parents in the community have little or no print competency, at least in English, being migrants. Now in Auckland (at least) it is not difficult to find areas where many, if not all, of these conditions are everyday realities for whole sections of a school population. These conditions, though, are all directly traceable to structured social arrangements.

Meanwhile, in another suburb we find children enjoying the advantages of above average income, literate and articulate parents, a 'good' school, personal congruence with school culture, sound health, family connections in the business community, etc.: that is, children enjoying all the benefits of having been born 'on the right side of social structure'. They are set up to value school as the route to a viable future and to succeed within it. Other things being equal — *and this is my point* — the two populations of children just described MUST stand different chances of ending up illiterate (or, conversely, of becoming literate). Thus may we *begin* to explain the phenomenon of patterned illiteracy.

This line of reasoning has important implications for our understanding of illiteracy and the development of an underclass, and thus for making policy suggestions in the service of enhanced social justice. I want to suggest two main points here.

We do well to place our primary focus on illiteracy as a *symptom* of social subordination rather than (primarily) as a cause of it. This, of course, is precisely to reverse the usual order of reasoning which, crudely, assumes that it is because people are illiterate, unqualified, etc. that they are unemployed, hence poor/economically powerless/subordinate. What I am arguing is that given the structured channels and distribution of power written into the very fabric of our society, the exercise of power within the routines of daily life (the working world, the political world, the educational world) renders groups of people illiterate *in one and the same process* as they are rendered poor, unemployed, homeless, politically impotent, culturally subordinate, malnourished and so on. This challenges any assumptions we might have that the development of an underclass arises to some extent *out of* people failing to become literate: that becoming illiterate is a causal factor in developing an underclass. Instead, being rendered illiterate occurs *within* the process by which subordination is socially produced and maintained.

This said, however, we must recognize also that illiteracy takes on some

kind of causal life as well. For the production of patterned illiteracy within the process of subordination 'acts back on' the process, reinforcing and maintaining it. That is, having been produced as a symptom of structured subordination, the phenomenon of patterned illiteracy contributes to maintaining and reproducing subordination. Two aspects should be noted here:

- (i) Being illiterate is a key facet of being excluded from (or, at least, extremely marginalized within) the relations and institutions of mainstream society: of being pushed beyond the periphery of economic, political and cultural engagement. Effective participation in economic and political activity presupposes the ability to read and write — and at an increasingly sophisticated level. The illiterate person who was 'born into' unemployment will almost certainly *remain* unemployed within the sort of economic setting where 'employment qualifications for all but a handful of domestic jobs begin at ninth grade level'²⁶ and where 'the economy is currently producing only about half of the total new jobs that will be required in the future'.²⁷ And, of course, even were an illiterate person to *find* employment in this kind of setting they will be vulnerable in the extreme. At one level this is evidenced by Kozol's (1985) example that 'given a paycheck and stub that lists the usual deductions, 26 per cent of adult Americans cannot determine if their paycheck is correct' (p. 9). At another, the logic of 'put up and shut up' is inexorable when the price for illiterate persons questioning the conditions of their work may be unemployment. Within the formal political sphere to be illiterate is to be disfranchized. While literate people may not necessarily (or even typically) use their skills to lobby and vote in their best interests, there is *at least the possibility* that they can and will; or that they can organize candidates, political tickets, etc. in accordance with their interests. By contrast, illiteracy virtually guarantees that folk cannot and, hence, will not. Being thus excluded from engagement in the social, economic and political mainstream, an underclass is doomed to remain there. The process of subordination is maintained and the subordinated class reproduced.
- (ii) Where the fact of patterned illiteracy correlating with wider patterned disadvantage is misconstrued, the very social process that produces subordination is masked and reinforced. When causes and symptoms become confused in mass thought, inequalities are readily 'legitimized' and explained away. For example, the unemployed themselves are blamed on the grounds that it is their illiteracy — presumed to reflect their personal failure to take advantage of educational opportunities, their laziness or apathy, etc. — which has led to their being unemployed. Under the same misapprehension we seek amelioration/solutions in the wrong places — for example, by emphasizing remedial education or reading intervention

programmes alone, rather than addressing and challenging the structures in which inequality and patterned illiteracy are grounded and, simultaneously, teaching our young to read and write in a critically informed manner.

These errors in understanding, policy and practice benefit those who prevail within existing social arrangements by keeping intact the structural basis of their advantage. It was an historical insight of the Cuban and Nicaraguan leaderships that literacy and structural change have to be addressed simultaneously if social justice is to be pursued seriously (or authentically).

This brings us to the important matter of improper literacy. For it is in the mass practice of improper literacy that this propensity to confuse symptoms and causes largely originates.

Literacy and Maintaining an Underclass: The Social Production of Improperly Literate People

It is a common mistake to see *the teaching of reading and writing* as a process of transmitting a *tool* to those who, once they acquire it, can use it as they will. This is, perhaps, the most profound mistake an educator or educationist can make. Rather, to teach reading and writing is to transmit and/or further refine and reinforce some particular *form* or other of reading and writing.²⁸ Postman (1970) puts the point in a nutshell:

Reading, the argument goes, is just a skill. What people read is their own business, and the reading teacher merely helps to increase a student's options. If one wants to read about America, one can go to De Toqueville or *The Daily News*; if one wants to read literature one may go to Melville or Jacqueline Susann. In theory this argument is compelling. In practice it is pure romantic nonsense . . . Most of our students will go to the grave not having read, of their own choosing, a paragraph of De Toqueville or Thoreau . . . As between Jacqueline Susann and Herman Melville — well, the less said, the better.

To put it bluntly, among every 100 students who learn to read, my guess is that no more than one will employ the process toward any of the lofty goals which are customarily held (such as giving folk access to great fiction and poetry, and enabling them to function as informed citizens). The rest will use the process to increase their knowledge of trivia, to maintain themselves at a relatively low level of emotional maturity, and to keep themselves simplistically uninformed about the social and political turmoil around them. (p. 247)

Postman, then, is claiming that the prevalent *form*, the dominant patterned

practice of reading, is superficial and uncritical.

No doubt many different specific forms of reading and writing could be identified and various classifications of literacy made. The particular distinction I want to suggest here is between being properly and improperly literate. Further, I will relate this distinction to the social majority who fall outside the economic, political and cultural power elites.

The distinction I propose between being properly and improperly literate begins from the work of Wayne O'Neil and is elaborated by reference to C. Wright Mills and Paulo Freire. In his 1970 paper, 'Properly Literate', O'Neil distinguishes proper from improper literacy according to whether or not reading and writing enhances people's capacity for genuine control and rational decision-making in their lives. Improper literacy reduces and destroys control — offering a mere illusion of control in place of genuine control. It is an unfortunate feature of our modern schooled society, says O'Neil, that 'we have too much improper literacy at the expense of properly literate folk' (p. 263). The problem, as O'Neil sees it, lies in the teaching of reading within school, whereby experience of the world is reduced to the surface linear arrangement of letters on a page. Word and world are split. Knowledge becomes shallow. Reading is treated 'as if it were another language, another world, not as if it were a highly abstract representation of the world the child already has tacit knowledge of.' By pushing reading 'into contextless space', school takes the first step in destroying children's early sense of coherence. With coherence goes the chance for genuine understanding, and hence genuine control of and rational dealing with the world via print. The process of subverting rational understanding and control is completed by further reducing knowledge to superficiality and misunderstanding within the curriculum, whereby geography is reduced to a catalogue of names, products and capitals, history to a linear succession of dates and events and so on. O'Neil's suggested remedy is to let children *learn* to read, by letting reading emerge in the context of children and adults talking and telling of the riches the youngster already possesses. To promote proper literacy, says O'Neil, we must 'keep all the words and the world together and (children) involved in it'.

This, unfortunately, does not go far enough. There is no reason to believe that if somehow children are helped to keep the words and world together and themselves involved in it they will inevitably transcend or overcome the *structural* impediments that exist to genuine control and rational decision-making. How, for example, could merely keeping words and world together ensure a measure of genuine control for learners born into structural unemployment and sub-standard housing and nutrition? Something more is needed for members of subordinate social groups to achieve proper literacy and with it prospects for emancipation. Words and world must be kept together in the learning process, to be sure. *But they must be kept together in a special kind of way.* To see this we can turn to some ideas advanced by C. Wright Mills.

In *The Sociological Imagination* (1959), Mills notes the widespread feeling among people today in societies like our own that they are trapped; that the troubles they experience are beyond their capacity to overcome. They feel helpless — trapped in circumstances and caught up in processes of change they understand but dimly, and which they sense to be beyond their control. Ironically, the more information people have about their world — about the world beyond their immediate milieux of family, work, neighbourhood — the more powerless they typically feel; the less they seem to understand 'the meaning of their epoch for their own lives'.

One reason for this sense of helplessness and entrapment, says Mills, is the failure of so many people to grasp the relationship between biography and history, between feelings of personal entrapment and 'seemingly impersonal changes in the very structure of continent-wide societies' (p. 3). A precondition for escaping such feelings of entrapment, and confronting realistically the possibilities for control in our own life circumstances, is a quality of mind that enables us to perceive clearly the relationship between what is going on in the world and what may be happening within ourselves.

There is, according to Mills, an intimate connection between history and biography, between social structures (and changes in these structures) and our private experience of life. Mills (1959) says:

The facts of contemporary history are also facts about the success and failure of individual men and women. When a society is industrialized, a peasant becomes a worker; a feudal lord is liquidated or becomes a businessman. When classes rise or fall, a man is employed or unemployed; when the rate of investment goes up or down, a man takes heart or goes broke. When wars happen, an insurance salesman becomes a rocket launcher; a store clerk a radar man; a wife lives alone; a child grows up without a father. Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both. (p. 3).

The quality of mind by which people understand this relationship, and apply it to their own circumstances, is yielded by what Mills calls 'the sociological imagination'. By this we are able 'to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society' (p. 6).

Clearly, if we are going to speak of people gaining a measure of genuine control within their lives and capable of rational decision-making on important issues,²⁹ we must develop the sociological imagination which enables us to understand our individual lives and the history of our society in their mutual relationship.

Take, for instance, recent developments within the world of work including rampant unemployment, widening gaps between skilled and unskilled jobs resulting from technological change, etc.³⁰ For individuals to understand the choices (or lack of choice) that *really* face them and their children and how *these* choices have come to be; for individuals to know

what it would involve for people like them to act effectively to create new possibilities for choice; they must achieve an accurate understanding of existing 'facts' about the world of work as being historical outcomes. This involves understanding how the structuring of economic life (under late capitalism, say) has shaped the contours of economic life at the level of individual destinies.

It also involves, however, understanding how the social structure itself — in this case, the social structuring of economic life — is created, shaped and maintained (or modified) by what human beings do and omit to do. After all, structures are shaped and perpetuated, challenged and changed, in accordance with the quality of understanding and knowledge available to people. Reproduction and change are not simply outcomes of human intention and action; they also reflect lack of understanding, ideological domination, distorted 'information', etc. Understanding the nature and scope/limits of human agency is the other side to understanding the operation of social structure.

Now if 'keeping all the words and the world together' is to bring about a proper literacy that promotes genuine possibilities of control, rational understanding and decision-making (in our best interests) and makes for effective human agency on the part of all, the practice of reading and writing must be developed and maintained around the educational objective of enhancing sociological imagination. More than this, the acquisition and practice of literacy among subordinate social groups must be built around the full flowering of sociological imagination into what Freire calls *conscientization*.³¹ Proper literacy enhances people's control over their lives and their capacity for dealing rationally with the challenges of daily life by enabling them through the use of print to identify, understand and act to transform social relations and practices in which power (and thus, opportunity, advantage, etc.) is structured unequally. Improper literacy refers to practices of reading and writing which lack this enabling capacity.

As such, improper forms of reading and writing can range from practices which positively and systematically immerse subordinate groups in 'false consciousness' — that is, in ways of understanding and perceiving the world that actively contribute to their own domination and control in the interests of others — to practices which simply fail to engage our potential for sociological imagination and critically informed action for social justice.

Some Implications for Education Policy and Practice

Given the line of argument attempted above, it is clear that if significant progress is to be made toward a just society, the very structure of economic life in this country would have to be addressed in a direction diametrically opposite to that currently in process. The only sure way of preventing the

development of an underclass is by overturning the structured practices and relations that give rise to it. In our epoch that means replacing the social relations and practices of late capitalism, which create and sustain hierarchies, with a logic of democratic production. That a shift in this direction is compatible, at least initially, with maintaining a mixed economy — as required by the Commission's term of reference — is evidenced by the Nicaraguan case.

Whilst recognizing that this structural change is hardly foreseeable in New Zealand at this time, we can nevertheless suggest educational measures that (at least) increase the likelihood of such change being envisaged and sought. Very sketchily, such measures include the following:

- 1 We need greatly increased funding for adult literacy schemes which locate the acquisition of literacy skills in a context of 'problematising daily life'.³² It is worth noting that more moderate and limited approaches can nevertheless yield impressive and important results in terms of direct control over important elements of daily life — and do so quickly. Kozol (1985) refers to a neighbourhood initiative in the US where

literacy sessions that evolved around such words as 'tenant', 'landlord', 'lease', 'eviction', 'rat', and 'roach', led to one of the first rent strikes in our city. Words, connected to the world, led — not in years but in a matter of days — to the reward of a repainted building, the replacement of illegal exits which could be opened only from the outside of the building, and the reconstruction of a fire escape that served the tenants of a building of five storeys but could not be used because it had rotted into empty air above the second floor. Success so vivid and concrete, within the troubled streets beyond the little rooms in which we worked, became the basis for additional recruitments (p. 54.)

It is important, however, that increased funding for adult literacy programmes should go hand in hand with government ensuring resources for encouraging literacy teachers in appropriate pedagogy and paying them a wage in accordance with the social importance of the work they do. Funding community-based initiatives for promoting proper literacy would, indeed, be a valid form of devolving educational power to local populations. The work of people like Kozol and Shor suggests that there would be sufficient people able and disposed to provide the necessary human resources, once communities were convinced that the programmes being offered had real potential for empowerment.

- 2 It is an empirical question as to whether school-based intervention programmes such as Reading Recovery are the most effective approach to ensuring the mechanical ability to read and write. For the sake of argument let us assume that they are tolerably effective. The fact

remains, however, that on their own such programmes are virtually impotent to ameliorate the *deepest* problems associated with illiteracy. I do not in any way want to underestimate the value of protecting individuals from the emotional and functional traumas that attend illiteracy in a print society. I do, however, want to insist that for the real human benefits of being literate to materialize, it is necessary for people to practise *proper* forms of reading and writing. This requires us to countenance some major curricular and pedagogical changes in school learning — including programmes within tertiary institutions. Shallcrass has recently suggested that fostering proper literacy in the interests of enhanced social justice lies within our grasp. 'All we appear to lack', he says, 'is the wit, the imagination and the political will.'³³ Given that people like Shor, Kozol, Mace, Freire, Harris, Elsasser and John-Steiner, among very many others,³⁴ provide models for those of us who are short on imagination and wit, the only remaining constraint seems to be political will. Government's response to the findings of the Royal Commission will tell us much about how we are placed — at least officially — on this one.

- 3 It flows from 1 and 2 that colleges and university Departments of Education must be encouraged to research, practise, and transmit pedagogies and to develop curricula that embody the ideal of proper literacy. Were this recommendation to become a policy directive, its practical outcomes would, I believe, be profound.
- 4 An institute or Division of Literacy Studies should be developed and charged with investigating approaches to literacy that can be shown on solid empirical grounds to accord best with the goals identified in the Royal Commission's terms of reference.

One demand of properly literate New Zealanders must surely be that Government meet the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission on Social Policy with the support and commitment they merit.

Notes

- 1 For such a classification see Harris (1982).
- 2 See, for example, Harris (1982).
- 3 See Bourdieu (1977) and Jones (1986).
- 4 See Lankshear and Lawler (1987), chapter 1.
- 5 See Apple (1982a).
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 83-4.
- 7 For an historical account of the forging of a working class political identity see Thompson (1963).
- 8 See in general Apple (1982a).
- 9 See Willis (1977) and also Thompson (1963).

- 10 See Anyon (1979 and 1981).
- 11 The special notion of 'capital' employed here is derived from Bourdieu (1977).
See also Apple (1982b).
- 12 See Lauder, Khan and McGlinn (1988).
- 13 It is worth noting the creation of Unemployed Workers' Unions as overt attempts to counter this structural submersion of the economically disenfranchised.
- 14 David James (personal correspondence).
- 15 Adult Performance Level Study (1975) *Adult Functional Competency*, Austin, TX, University of Texas.
- 16 David James (personal correspondence).
- 17 See SET (1979).
- 18 David James comments that an important incentive prompting the NZCAE study was that the New Zealand Education Department had hitherto confidently replied to the UNESCO questionnaire that adult illiteracy did not exist here.
- 19 As evident from interview extracts in Kozol (1985).
- 20 See, for instance, Bowles and Gintis (1976); Bourdieu and Passeron (1977); Gambetta (1987), especially chapters 3 and 4; Jones (1986); Royal Commission on Social Policy (1987).
- 21 See Lankshear and Lawler (1987), pp. 136-7. Especially:

A simplified but commonly heard example . . . goes as follows. Some people are just dumb, lazy, come from 'deprived homes', or simply do not value education. As a result they do not get out of schooling what it has to offer them . . . They end up as working class (or unemployed) on low incomes (or welfare). Illiterate and poor, they make ineffective parents and pass on their disadvantages to their children.' This 'cycle of deprivation' begins from their inability to provide the kind of home background, support, stimulation, materials, experiences and other conditions through which children are enabled to acquire the skills and other learnings schools offer them . . . This is patterned illiteracy and wider disadvantage commonly 'explained'.
- 22 *Ibid.*, pp. 137-46.
- 23 See, for instance, Willis (1977) and Apple (1982a).
- 24 These outcomes also reflect, of course, the *human* responses to living within these structures. The situation, here, is not a matter of simple determination structures. Human agency is involved; there is a dynamic interplay between structure and agency.
- 25 See, for example, Castells (1980).
- 26 Kozol (1985), p. 5.
- 27 See Apple (1982a), p. 5.
- 28 Compare my definition of literacy teachers in Lankshear (1987).
- 29 The whole point of *rational* decision-making is predicated on having access to optimally accurate information. The assumption is that the more rational is one's deliberation, the more probable is a desired outcome. Rationality, then, must account for ideological factors which can distort understanding.
- 30 See, for example, Braverman (1974); Blackburn and Mann (1979).
- 31 See, for example, Freire (1972, 1973, 1974 and 1985).
- 32 See Shor (1980) for a discussion of the notion of 'problematizing' daily life.
- 33 Shallcrass (1988).

Illiteracy, Improper Literacy and the Development of an Underclass

- 34 In addition to Shor (1980), Kozol (1985), Freire (1972, 1973, 1974, 1985) and Harris (1982), see Elsasser and John-Steiner (1977) and Mace (1979).

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Colin Lankshear

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Towards an Alternative Transition Education Policy¹

Wanda Korndörffer

In March 1977 the line charting official unemployment statistics in New Zealand began its ragged but steep ascent from a figure of just over 4000 out of work in that month to 78,170 registered unemployed in December 1986. In addition to the registered unemployed in December 1986, there were 26,777 people on state-subsidized employment and training schemes (Department of Labour, 1987). State-sponsored training programmes for young people (such as YPTP, STEPS, JETS, TAP, LINKS, ACCESS and MACCESS) in secondary schools, polytechnics and private enterprise have been a direct response to this collapse of the youth labour market in New Zealand (Barry, c.1984, p. 9). As a form of educational intervention, these programmes are legitimated on the grounds that they provide skills for young people which effectively increase their opportunities for access to the labour market. This legitimization is derived from a set of theoretical assumptions, based on orthodox economic theories, about the nature of the labour market and its relationship to the state and to education. Young people are said to be unable to compete effectively in the labour market when there is an excess supply of labour because they lack the attributes that employers prefer when they buy labour: youth is seen to be inexperienced, unskilled, unstable and often lacking sufficient educational qualification and, particularly, good work habits. Fewer available jobs and, therefore, a buyer's market for labour, ensure that young people must compete for work with more experienced, skilled, stable and qualified labour. Because of their lack of maturity and the absence of effective careers education, young people are said to be unaware of potential job opportunities and are particularly ineffective in seeking these out. 'Last-on, first-off' trade union policies are considered to disadvantage young people who tend to be 'last-on', and negotiated award rates of pay and minimum wage scales are said to prevent employers from hiring young people — it is too expensive for them to pay adult wages for less productive labour. It is argued that reduced recruitment in a recession means that fewer school leavers are able to get a first job which would give them work experience

and skills. An extended and changing technology demands a more flexible and better educated workforce than previously — it is claimed that young people are not being adequately served by the education system in this respect. Demographic factors and the increased participation of married women in the labour market have also disadvantaged young people according to this theory. In addition, it is argued that young people's dependent status (within families, for example) means that they require less income than other members of the workforce and can choose to indulge a preference for leisure (unemployment).

The thrust of these approaches is that youth unemployment is the result of a disequilibrium in the labour market which is compounded by various negative attributes of young people so that a structural inequality which favours older, skilled workers results. For young people to be able to compete equally in the market, therefore, their stock of human capital must be equalized with that of adult workers. That is, young people's skills, attitudes and qualifications must be upgraded through the provision of vocational and social skills training which will enable them to compete in a labour market with contracting opportunities for unskilled labour and which will keep intact the disciplines of the workplace during periods of unemployment. The emphasis is on adaptability and flexibility for young people in a changing economic environment, and educational and training interventions are seen to be an appropriate state response to the problem of youth unemployment (see *Skills for Young People*, 1985, for example).

Thus state responses to youth unemployment that are based on orthodox economic theory are not only concerned with economic policies aimed at increasing productivity and reducing unemployment. They are also concerned with policies that attempt to upgrade the skills, attributes, attitudes and qualifications of young people so that they are better able to compete in the labour market. While it is acknowledged that transition education and youth training programmes are potentially inflationary, these are defended on the grounds that they have unaccountable social and future economic benefits. In addition, proponents of this kind of response to youth unemployment argue strongly that such policies promote equity in society by equalizing the human capital and the productivity of all workers.

There is, however, an alternative theoretical framework within which we can examine the issues of youth unemployment and transition education. Within this framework, youth unemployment is seen as a structural effect of the capitalist mode of production that affects a specific sector of the population, youth, rather than a result of young people's individual choices, preferences or deficits in the market. The division of labour that is inherent in capitalist production is reflected in the fact that young people, in common

with women and black workers, have been used historically as a surplus pool of labour. Skilled, adult, white, male workers have, through a variety of historical struggles, managed to gain advantages in the labour market in terms of conditions and security of employment over these other sectors

of the labour force. Organized adult labour is in a better position to gain, protect and retain its own employment than is young, unorganized, new-entrant labour.

This analysis would suggest that, as the reserve army of labour (which includes young people) is located within the secondary sector of a segmented labour market (i.e. in an unskilled or, at most, semi-skilled job market characterized by low pay, casual and part-time employment, poor working conditions, insecurity and minimal career structures — Edwards *et al.*, 1975), transition education programmes for unemployed youth will be aimed at that labour market sector. In addition, young people are particularly vulnerable to the restructuring of their adult status in line with current labour requirements of capital: it is possible to extend the school leaving age, in a variety of ways and to force young people to remain in a dependent position in their families in ways that are not so readily available, at this point in history, when dealing with women and black workers. Lettieri (1987, pp. 152), for example, claims that further education is 'forced unproductive labour' for unemployed young people — education functions in this sense to keep young people out of the labour market for a longer period — and Robins and Cohen (1987, p. 8ff) regard the provision of a youth wage as giving young people the illusion of adult freedom and independence while leaving them still dependent on parental support.

According to this theory, however, the social relations of a capitalist mode of production do not allow unemployed young people to be left to the vagaries of market forces. The generation of future prime-age workers with the requisite skills and attitudes for participation in this form of production must be ensured and attempts are made to extend a very real control over those young people who remain outside the controls of the workplace. To this end, the state responds to youth unemployment by instituting youth training programmes and various forms of transition education. The production of temporary and modifiable youth training programmes emphasizes both the short-term nature of the problem and the adaptability of the solution to 'individual needs', and the legitimating discourse that surrounds the programmes coheres with the common sense notions about unemployment — namely that individuals are unemployed because they are deficient in some way and that, therefore, they need skills and attitude training to enable them to become productive and disciplined workers who are acceptable to employers (Cohen, 1984, p. 119).

According to Edgley (1978, p. 21) industrial skills 'require no particular intelligence, can be learned in four or five weeks or less, and are properly exercised without conscious attention', and these properties are rapidly becoming the attributes of clerical, sales and service skills. The problem for the state, then, is not one of sufficient investment in human capital to produce a necessary level of skill in workers, nor is it one of equity. The problem is centrally one of how to maintain a cultural apprenticeship for young people; that is, how to maintain a 'work ethic' and a set of common sense cultural

attitudes towards work, when work in its traditional sense is not available (Willis, 1984). By providing courses that say to young people that their unemployment results from their own lack of social and vocational skills, it is possible for the state to maintain a commitment to waged labour and to the social relations of production in these young people.

The critique of responses to extensive youth unemployment that are based in orthodox economic theory is substantial. Not only are programmes that are based on orthodox approaches to the market perceived as inadequate as a means of resolving the problem of youth unemployment — more importantly such programmes are seen as an integral part of the ideological interventions by the state in the conflict between capital and labour, interventions which work to mystify the relationship between qualifications, work and wages (Gleeson and Mardle, 1980, p. 147).

In any discussion of transition education, it must be accepted that we are talking about the transition of *working class* young people from school to the labour market. Where there are some middle class young people who are having difficulties finding work during the current collapse of the youth labour market, in the main the recession and the consequent downturn in the demand for unskilled and semi-skilled labour, concurrent with the increased demand for credentialled labour, is detrimentally affecting working class youth. Work is a definitive characteristic of working class identification: not just any work, but wage labour — the process of offering one's labour power for sale in the market, then having that labour power put to work to produce value and surplus value in return for a variable wage. The effects on working class youth of not being able to obtain employment are not only economically but also socially devastating — unemployment makes these young people vulnerable to charges of 'bludging' (or parasitism) on the labour power of their friends and family members.

If we continue to follow in the footsteps of Britain, working class youth face a very bleak future in this country. In Britain, the youth training initiatives have led to dead-weighting and displacement in employment rather than to the creation of new jobs for youth. These initiatives have tended also to be a straightforward provision of cheap labour for employers who have been paid an incentive by the state to keep youth wages low. The apprenticeship (skilled labour) system has been systematically dismantled and amended legislation has enabled youths to be employed in factories from the age of 14 without the usual health and safety provisions that cover 'real' workers. The 'training' component of many on-the-job programmes is non-existent and unpoliced and transition programmes are being privatized, with private sector management agencies providing a 'competitive' training and education for young people who are 'in transition'. Popular ideas about youth (and the education of working class youth in particular) are being restructured as part of the more general state restructuring of the labour market (Allum and Quigley, 1983; Goldstein, 1984). These trends are also visible in the provision of transition education and in changing labour market policies in New Zealand.

Concomitant with the current restructuring of the labour market is an attempted restructuring of youth itself and, particularly, unemployed youth. Instead of being offered credentialled skills training, young unemployed people are to become 'adaptable', 'flexible' and 'redeployable' in their approaches to the labour market, their possession of skills and their ability to maintain themselves physically and psychologically through periods of unemployment. Watts (1983, p. 74) refers to this process as 'training for stock': if training does not create jobs, presumably it attempts to create appropriately skilled workers who will be available if and when the economy recovers sufficiently to need them. This form of training, however, is not in specific technical skills, but in normative attitudes, motivation and social competence within a framework which suggests that routine tasks are more difficult than they really are (Dickinson and Erben, 1982). As Gleeson (1983, p. 2) points out, the emergence of youth training has little to do with technical changes in production or with providing the necessary skills for improved efficiency — rather, it is concerned with 'regulating youth labour markets and with establishing training as a substitute for employment'. In New Zealand it is obvious that real courses with real certification for real jobs are offered to apprentices, secretarial and nursing students, while ersatz skills training courses, with no certification beyond a certificate of attendance and with little promise of future employment, are offered to unemployed youth.

What can be done to promote alternative ways of dealing with youth unemployment in this country that would be more beneficial for young people? This is a complex question because we live in a society where, for all the liberal rhetoric of the state, the driving force of the labour market is the purchase of labour power at the cheapest and/or most productive rate possible rather than the provision of an equitable distribution of employment at the expense of profit. There will be pressures, therefore, applied to the state to restructure the youth labour market (to provide youth rates in awards, to dismantle the apprenticeship system, to subsidize youth labour, to exclude youth from award provisions for conditions of employment and so on) to favour the accumulation of capital. In addition, pressures will be applied to unions to permit this in exchange for 'generous' redundancy agreements and the protection of a proportion of present adult employment, particularly for skilled workers. A Marxist analysis indicates that we are unable to eliminate such inequalities through liberal-democratic reforms of the reproductive structures in society (such as education) — such elimination can only occur through class struggle at the economic level of production (Kay, 1979; Harris, 1982; Wood, 1986). In these terms, in terms of the work that the state must do on behalf of capital, it is possible to regard any alternative that could be proposed as idealist. However, to give up the struggle on those grounds is to leave the field wide open to technicist and monetarist 'solutions' to the problem of youth employment. While we know that education provision has little effect in interrupting patterns of social reproduction (and, in fact, reinforces those patterns), it is still worth attempting to set out the basics necessary for a transition education that will

do more than provide a holding pen for unskilled, unqualified, unemployed working class youth (Nash, 1983).

At the ideological level, common sense ideas about youth unemployment (that young people are undifferentiated and equal in their status and opportunities; that youth unemployment results from individual deficiencies; that youth unemployment can be removed by the provision of transition programmes) need to be challenged. Deconstruction of official discourse, therefore, becomes part of the struggle to be honest to and about young people who are under stress. To refuse to speak about youth unemployment, to accept an official position that young people are merely 'in transition' to adulthood and that they simply require assistance to make successful transitions, is to deny young people and their parents the understanding that they *are* unemployed, not 'in transition', so that they can challenge this material reality at a material level. It is to affirm some common sense beliefs that young people are deficient in some way, that they need further education or training to put them right for the labour market. It is to blunt the tools that they need to penetrate the discourse that surrounds pre-employment programmes and it works to reduce the possibilities of their collective action, based on a class analysis of their world, to try to change their lives substantially. A Labour government ought to be able to call a spade a spade. But whatever party is in power the government must be urged to acknowledge the fact of youth unemployment; to acknowledge that young people and schools are not to blame for the collapse of the youth labour market; and to admit that, if social value comes from waged work, it is waged work that is necessary for young people as a priority (not life skills, leisure skills or transition education).

The Labour government in New Zealand is restructuring the post-school period so that young people are either employed or in transition or further education of some sort. The carrot that draws young people onto the present transition courses (such as Access), however, is the hope that they will get a job. Why should they volunteer for 'further education' when, if the government is honest in its approach to youth unemployment, that education would be understood not to improve their chances in the labour market but rather to contain them in the hope of a future upturn in the economy? Official discourse that came clean on transition education would negate the idea that youth unemployment is a result of individual inability to compete effectively in a fair labour market. And if that happened, workers might begin to question why it is that *their* children are being put into 'transition education' courses rather than into certificated courses that might provide some basis for successful competition in the labour market.

It is one thing to criticize the government for the provision of transition education in its present and proposed forms. It is another to provide realistic alternatives. The government can simply point to the economy and say, 'there are no jobs for young people, there is nothing else we can do.' There are some choices, however, within the constraints of the economic foundations

of unemployment, as to how we treat young people.

The first choice, one that I have already indicated in this chapter, is that of being honest, of enabling young people to be able to make realistic decisions about their lives that are based on fact, not mystification. This is a problematic choice for government but one that I see as basic to any real alternatives. The government could also choose to work with the trade unions to create a genuine redistribution of the employment that is available: job-sharing, shorter working weeks, early retirement plans and extended study leave for workers are but some of the options. I am not talking here about forced retirement, redundancies or reduced hours of work with no compensation. I am talking about providing genuine alternatives to full-time work for those who wish to take up the option. One of the difficulties with this idea, of course (and one of the serious criticisms that can be made when this sort of alternative is presented within a liberal theoretical framework) is that, while it may be possible (even profitable) to apply the scheme in the primary sector of the labour market, it will only circulate employment within that sector. For those whose employment 'field' is the secondary sector of the labour market (warehousing, foodhandling, machinist and process work, child care, farm and general labour, sales and services, for example), employers are unlikely to agree to schemes that do not produce profit. Although these employers are becoming aware of the increased productivity obtained by employing, for example, two women half-time rather than one full-time, they are unlikely to contribute willingly to the costs of study leave, early retirement plans and a full-time wage for a shorter working week. Here the government can make a choice — it can choose to intervene in the secondary sector on behalf of labour by, for example, offering to pay the difference in wages between short-time work and full-time pay if the employer takes on another worker on a shorter working week. Genuine post-school educational and training opportunities could be made available to workers during the state-paid working hours. There would, of course, need to be rigorous state and union policing of such schemes to ensure that they were implemented as intended. Some redistribution of present employment could also be obtained by providing a real living allowance (wage) to those who *choose* not to be employed in waged work — an allowance (wage) that would enable the recipient to live a 'normal' life within our society, to be housed, fed, clothed, educated and to raise children at an average standard of living, the only criteria being that one is not in waged employment. To imagine that employers would pay for this out of their profits is idealist in the extreme. Employers ride out a recession by cutting cost, corners and wages (not profits) so that alternative policies and practices requiring financial support (such as paid study leave) would require active financial intervention in the economy and the labour market by the state. This amounts to taxing workers to pay for other workers' labour power, but it seems to be one of the few positive alternatives to asking youth to wait for the revolution.²

Realistic options, in terms of current transition education provisions, are available. For example, genuinely open access to a wide range of education alternatives should be made available for young people, whether employed or unemployed (which is in some ways what Access tries to do in theory [see Marshall, 1987], but fails to carry through in practice). If, however, we want young unemployed people willingly to enter a wide range of further education, then we must provide contexts for learning experiences to be pleasurable. At present, one of the most forceful criticisms that can be made of the education system is that, by the age of 15 or 16, many young people leave school with a determination never to darken the doors of any education institution again. Quite simply, they hate school and are unlikely willingly to participate in any education programme that embodies the usual social relations of the secondary school system. The idea of enabling young people (and, particularly, young unemployed people) to *enjoy* themselves is both difficult to conceive and difficult to put into practice in a society with puritanical attitudes towards work and schooling. These comments, that surfaced at a seminar on transition courses, are typical of attitudes towards the education of young people that would need to be completely reversed:

We are talking about kids who have not only opted out of school which is bad enough, but have also opted out of *discipline* . . . I do not like to think of some kid enjoying himself for three weeks — it's not politically palatable. (Regional Education Officer)

Our Outdoor Skills Course is a character-building course rather than recreation — the concept is not for the kids to enjoy themselves. (Trades tutor)

Yet if we try to make learning a pleasurable and fulfilling activity, it is probable that many will volunteer for further education. My own research (Korndörffer, 1988) has indicated that, while working class unemployed young people tend to have an instrumental approach to further education (and that, therefore, such further education would need to be linked strongly with effective certification in the labour market), they also respond positively to learning environments within which they are respected, treated as adults and provided with some measure of control over their own learning experiences, over what they learn and how and where they learn it.³ It would take another chapter to outline *how* education could be made pleasurable; the point is that it should and could be. Such education should also provide young people with the tools to explain their current situation rather than mystify it (see Cohen, 1984, for examples of how this could be carried out successfully with young people within a constrained learning and teaching context). Such education must put knowledge and power over their own learning into young people's hands; it must enable them to act independently and collectively to become adults, adults whose only lack is the wage. In itself this is not utopian or idealist. It is quite possible for youth to take control of their own education (and, indeed, this is what 'good'

educational practice aims for). It is only idealist when placed within the constraints of the current purposes of transition education and within present policies for restructuring the youth labour market so that young people do *not* become learning, questioning adults, but rather are made even more dependent and passive in the face of their displacement from the labour market. These are policies that 'adapt' youth to their situation rather than educating them so that they can challenge that situation:

Such an approach implies, in part at least, that the young unemployed are disadvantaged in seeking employment because they are deficient in relevant and acceptable abilities, experience, motivations and attitudes . . . The image is dominated by an implicit model of a sort of cultural vacuum which can be filled by the provision of suitable remedial treatment. This rests on an extremely crude view of social life and socialization. (Atkinson *et al.*, 1982, pp. 120-1)

Social and life skills training provisions in transition education programmes, however, can enable young people to gain really useful knowledge about themselves and their environments and to take some control over their own lives. If we believe that 'knowledge equals power', the potential is available for these programmes to provide access to educational forms and structures for young people, an access that has often been denied them through the process of schooling. However, the normative control function that is built into the premises of these provisions, that propels students towards an acceptance of others' definitions of how young people should live and what they should value, must be recognized. As Nash points out (1987):

The essential reason why there is this transition provision at all is not the technical necessity of training (still less a commitment to education) but the imperative of social control. For those working in transition education the nagging question is always whether their work can be more than social control and whether education is really possible under these conditions. (p. 34)

I acknowledge that any suggestions for action within the *status quo* that are proposed here are not sufficient in themselves to reduce the contradictions inherent in transition education. The very provision of transition education must be challenged and opened up to critical query. I also do not wish to deny or diminish the difficulties transition education teachers face in their daily work, the fact that much of their energy must go into ensuring basic needs are met: job security, maintenance of minimum resources and staffing, the provision of minimum-standard teaching facilities, as well as the additional difficulty of working with students who, in the main, will reject any teaching that is not seen to be immediately relevant to their urgent task of getting a job, any job:

Quite frankly, I would rather be employed than be classified as an outcast or an untouchable. I don't care if I'm 'reproducing the class

structure' by wanting to do any job at all at any rate of pay. I'd rather be a member of the lowest lower class than unemployed. (Young Persons Training Programme student — unemployed for five months)

But we need to address the whole notion of transition education (who it is for, why it is necessary, how is it put into practice, to what ends) and attempt to put in place an alternative practice that really addresses the needs of working class young people within a constrained youth labour market. In other words, we must work at a difficult task with Gramsci's pessimism of the intellect and optimism of the will if we are to educate and empower working class youth.

Notes

- 1 Modified excerpts in this chapter have been taken from: Korndörffer, W.J. (1985) 'School to work: The "problem" of transition', *SITES: Journal of Radical Perspectives on Culture*, 10, autumn, pp. 22-39; Korndörffer, W.J. (1986) 'Transition education: "Sing it with a hammer in the hands of the children"', in MAHAREY, S. and O'BRIEN, M. (Eds.) *Alternatives: Socialist Essays for the 1980s*, Palmerston North, Massey University/Benton Ross, pp. 132-48; and Korndörffer, W.J. (1988) 'Vocational skills training in transition education: Successful practice in New Zealand?', in CORSON, D. (Ed.) *Education for Work: Background to Policy and Curriculum*, Palmerston North, Dunmore Press.
- 2 'Properly to understand unemployment we need to understand what is missing — the wage. The wage is not simply an amount of money. It is certainly the only naked reward for labour under capitalism, but for all that it is the only connection with other social possibilities, processes and desirable things. As such it operates as the crucial pivot for several other processes, social and cultural transitions quite unlike itself. . . . Waged work is still the key to its opposite. No wage is no keys to the future' (Willis, 1984, pp. 7-8).
- 3 One of the most 'successful' transition education courses that I have seen was one where the students were allowed to take over the control of the course content and programming — their sustained eagerness to participate in the programme and the lack of absenteeism over a ten-week period were in stark contrast to the 'normal' student participation in transition education in the same technical institute.

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Towards an Alternative Transition Education Policy

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Trade Union Education and Democracy

Linda Sissons

There is power in the factory
There is power in the land
There is power in the hands of the worker
But it all amounts to nothing
If together we don't stand
There is power in the union.

(Billy Bragg)

The Labour Relations Act (1987) asserts that the industrial relations system in New Zealand relies on the coexistence and approximately equal negotiating strength of 'strong, effective and representative' employer and employee bodies. However, in relation to trade union education, employees have traditionally been at a major disadvantage in relation to employers. In 1983, something in excess of \$18 million per year was given to the provision of management education in universities and polytechnics and less than \$1 million, through the Vocational Training Council, to the provision of union education — a form of differential funding which only exacerbated the existing inequalities in resources that employers and the trade union movement have to draw on. In the 1986/87 year the entire income of the union movement was \$63 million; the profits from just one company, Fletcher Challenge, were \$347 million.

In this context the passing of the Union Representatives Education Leave Act and the establishment of the Trade Union Education Authority (TUEA) in August 1986, while not greatly remarkable events, represented a significant redistribution of educational resourcing for the trade union movement. In particular, the Act legislated for paid education leave for union representatives to attend courses which would make them more active and informed participants in their union and in their employment (though with a legislated maximum per person of five days per year); it confirmed the International Labour Organization principle that the union movement should have the responsibility for directing the curriculum and selecting the personnel

involved in union education; and it established TUEA, with the statutory power to promote, monitor, evaluate and advise on not only trade union education but also education for adult workers, and the general education of working people. It also provided funding of just under \$1 million in the first year and \$1.6 million in the second. When judged against the \$18 million used for management training it is not a large sum but at least an important set of principles and trade union educational practices have been established.

The Rationale for Trade Union Education

There are at least four important reasons why trade union education should be seen as both integral to the union movement and essential to a democratic society. Firstly, the business of running a union and negotiating successfully with employers has become far more complex than in the past. Union negotiators need to be able to match the legal, accountancy and economic skills of the employer advocates if they are to compete with them. Moreover, the experience of the past five years of the New Right revolution in New Zealand has taught the union movement that it needs expertise in the policy area to contest the economic advice coming from powerful institutions like the big business pressure group, the Round Table and the Treasury. But such expertise cannot be left in the hands of 'experts'; it needs to be disseminated to the rank and file if voting on often complex issues is to be well informed.

Secondly, and relatedly, research by Olssen (1985) has shown that an increasing number of union officials is being drawn from the university-educated middle classes. There are several reasons for this: recruitment of union officials has become more meritocratic and hence competitive as unions have appreciated the need for professional skills. Similarly the career structures which some unions have established have become more attractive to the educated middle class. As a result the formal educational attainments of union leaders are now considerably higher than those of the rank and file. Now this change in the nature of the union leadership raises certain issues regarding the influence of higher education, and especially university education, on union leaders. Olssen argues that one consequence of higher education is that it incorporates union leaders into the capitalist class. He uses data of the kind shown in Table 13.1 to support his view.

What Table 13.1 suggests is that university-educated union leaders are less likely than those who have not had a university education to be politically active. Moreover, they are also less likely to think of themselves as working class. The danger, according to Olssen, is that university-educated union leaders may be less likely to identify with the membership they represent and less likely to see the importance of political activity as contributing to the welfare of the trade union movement as a whole. In other words they may see their job in purely technicist terms. Yet the work of Stephens (1979),

Table 13.1 Social and attitudinal characteristics of union leaders by level of educational attendance

	Level of educational attendance					
	Primary only		Secondary		University	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Political party membership</i>						
Member	13	61.9	51	66.9	16	48.5
Non-member	8	38.1	22	30.1	17	51.5
Total	21	100.0	73	100.0	33	100.0
<i>Parents' political activity</i>						
Active	10	45.5	25	32.9	10	30.3
Not-active	12	54.5	51	67.7	23	69.7
Total	22	100.0	76	100.0	33	100.0
<i>Class identification</i>						
Middle/upper middle	0	0.0	4	5.3	11	33.3
Working class	15	71.4	33	44.0	8	24.4
Never think in terms of social class	6	28.6	38	50.7	14	42.4
Total	21	100.0	75	100.0	33	100.1

Source: Olssen, 1985, p. 178.

Korpi (1983) and Esping-Andersen (1985) clearly shows that the strength of the trade union movement is intimately related to the progress of left-wing political parties in parliament.

Clearly class incorporation is always a danger and higher education may be one route to it. This is certainly the fear of one respondent interviewed by Olssen (1985):

I can see the day when nearly all unions are run by people who have never worked a day in their lives. I can see it happening now . . . look at this lawyer lady who's been appointed to the . . . workers . . . She's got nothing in common with the people in the industry. (p. 175)

One traditional argument used to counter the danger of incorporation has been that the trade union movement should have access to its own independent form of education. This is a principle that even this government has endorsed, precisely because capital and labour have quite different perspectives on the world. However, there are a number of reasons why we should reject Olssen's claim that the mere fact of a higher education is likely to lead to class incorporation amongst union leaders. For a start, Olssen appears to have a restricted sample as regards the educational qualifications of union members. Given that union membership encompasses both white and blue collar workers, there will be many unions where a significant number of workers will have had tertiary education and will expect their officials to reflect that. Moreover, Olssen ignores the point that universities, themselves, are a site of ideological struggle and hence seeing the world from the perspective of capital is not an automatic consequence of a university

education. Universities have to change, to accept that they have an obligation to set up genuine dialogue with the working class in order to provide useful resources — just as they are gradually accepting an obligation to dialogue with Maori, and just as they have always accepted the obligation to dialogue with lawyers, doctors and accountants. To give one very clear example of this, a course has been set up at Waikato University in trade union and labour studies which teaches from the joint perspectives of the trade union movement and the University. It is also worth pointing out that in Sweden the trade union movement attracts many economics graduates to its ranks; it isn't necessarily the case that all such graduates will find their natural home in the Treasury! Finally, we need to tie the need for trade union education back to the first point about the high degree of skill required for all unionists. We no longer have a choice as to whether we should have a well educated union leadership and membership; both are necessary in today's world: the old antithesis between an educated middle class and a less educated working class, raised by Olssen's respondent, has no place if the union movement is to survive. If, then, the first task of a trade union education is to provide the necessary skills for understanding current industrial, social and political issues, the second role is to provide a trade union perspective for all its members so that questions of incorporation and divisions between the trade union leadership and its members do not arise.

Thirdly, a trade union education should be seen as part of a wider popular adult education. In the words of Rubenson (1989), such an education

by giving practical insights into the rules of democracy; . . . confers knowledge . . . acts as a springboard to more advanced studies; and . . . introduces the individual into the world of popular movements with its collective resources for action. (pp. 134–5)

In effect adult education in general, and trade union education in particular, should be seen as integral to the development of democratic citizenship. This really follows from the arguments developed above where it was suggested that the material basis for all, in our society, to participate democratically as citizens depends upon a strong trade union movement whose interests are well represented in Parliament. But a strong trade union movement needs to educate its workers and those outside the movement if those democratic conditions are to be maintained. The model for this view derives from Sweden and it is worth discussing the view of adult education taken by the trade union movement there.

In Sweden, the push for adult education by the trade union movement has been an integral feature of its attempt to increase wage earners' influence over their working lives. There the trade union movement has seen the attempt to democratize political and cultural life as inseparable from the process of democratizing working life and adult education as a key to the former. Within this context the union movement has argued that particular attention should be paid to less well educated adults and that their education

should be funded by the state 'since the people who had paid for the increase in primary and secondary education should have their share of the increasing educational resources' (*ibid.*). During the period 1974-83 the proportion of those in Sweden with less than nine years, education and thereby considered less well educated dropped from approximately 45 per cent to 35 per cent. Of those, between 30 and 20 per cent participated in trade union organized studies. In other words, true to its philosophy, the trade union movement became a major provider of adult education for this group.

In Sweden the strong development of social democratic politics has led to a positive view of the trade union movement. Unfortunately, this has not been the case, generally, in New Zealand. Arguably a genuine education for democratic citizenship would begin at school where students would be taught the essential role of the trade union movement in democratic politics. However, in a recent study of trade union education in secondary schools Sultana (1988) found that unions form by and large a 'null curriculum'. Indeed the very silence about unions constitutes a significant form of teaching since ignorance is never a neutral void, rather it has an important impact on the alternatives that are foreclosed by it and the perspectives from which one views a problem. In the case of education about trade unions the promotion of ignorance should not be seen as an accident. Where the forces which represent employers have a significant advantage (and we should include here the media and formal education), the promotion of ignorance about trade union organizations should be expected. Harris (1979) has argued that the promotion of ignorance in schools regarding working people's organizations is not an accident under capitalism but tends to be the norm — which, of course, is all the more reason why trade union education should be seen as so crucial for the development of democratic citizenship. Sultana quotes from the students in his sample: a fifth former says, 'Unions are like a secret — you only learn about them when you leave school.' Another student sums up the situation in the following way:

Teachers tell us how to do our job . . . but the bits in between, like unions and that sort of stuff, I wouldn't know what they're about.

His friend adds:

Neither would I! We don't know whether they're good or a nuisance. It's mostly what you see on TV and that sort of stuff — what your mates think of work and their experience.

Sultana concludes his survey by categorizing teachers as conventional intellectuals — who might be expected to explain the basic facts about unions, oppressive intellectuals — who relegate unions to the null curriculum and thereby promote ignorance with all that entails given the existing power structures, and transformative intellectuals — who would use teaching about unions as a way into an analysis of the nature of power in our society. If Sultana's findings can be generalized, and I think there is good reason to

believe they can, then what is most worrying is the absence of even conventional intellectuals, to teach the basic facts about unions.

Clearly we do not live in a popular culture in which unions are a generally accepted part of life and particularly at schools. In one sense what is curious about this is that while teachers hold to a strong professional ideology of political neutrality, precisely because they regard themselves as professionals it seems perfectly acceptable for students to simulate stock market games and learn how to become entrepreneurs while trade unions remain taboo. Learning how to make money appears 'natural' while the activity of defending workers' rights introduces an unwelcome 'political' note into the curriculum.

Of course in this schools are merely reflecting the conventional wisdom of the popular culture, what Harris (1979) calls 'lived ideology'. For in everyday perceptions it is unions that introduce a discordant note in our lives by striking thereby inconveniencing us. And, by the very act of striking and they unsettle us because they remind us that 'a fair day's wage' is not determined by altruism but by struggle; at the heart of our society lies conflict. In contrast, we do not see the employers using their equivalent to the strike — the flight of capital overseas; all we observe are the resulting unemployment figures. Generally, the media mirror everyday perceptions and so lived ideology is reinforced by what is observed. It is, after all, unusual to find the kind of support for the trade union movement expressed in the quotation which prefaces this chapter!

Yet if the argument of this chapter is correct, that a strong trade union movement is necessary for the development of democratic citizenship, then a major change is needed in our political culture so that the positive contribution the union makes to our society is understood. This brings me to the fourth reason for trade union education.

Ultimately trade union education cannot buy into some of the current deep rooted assumptions about education found in popular culture. It must itself help to promote change in some of the fundamental assumptions that we have about control of our working lives and educational equality. Again the point has been succinctly made by the LO, the Swedish counterpart to our Combined Trade Union (CTU) organization:

to facilitate movements between the classes (social mobility) for particular individuals, without doing anything about the mechanisms maintaining and reinforcing class divisions . . . *The job is not to construct ladders to enable individuals to climb from the role of ordinary employee. The job is to change the role of all employees as a group and their conditions at work and in the community.* (Englund, 1989)

The trade union movement needs to engage actively in the education both of its members and of the community as a whole as to the policies by which democratic citizenship can be extended in our society. In other words it not only needs to educate working people about the role trade unions have played

in the development of citizenship rights in New Zealand; it also needs to look to the future to advocate policies by which those rights can be extended.

Given the limited resources TUEA has, even with the extra government assistance, the question we should now ask is, how successful has trade union education been in beginning to bring about such a change in popular perception?

Trade Union Education Since 1986

While it is too soon to judge the extent to which trade union education is meeting the aims and conforming to the rationale discussed above, there have been positive achievements. Between August 1986 and March 1988 an estimated 40,419 participant days have been spent in union seminars by nominated representatives. We have been particularly successful in extending union education beyond the main urban centres. For example, in the Waikato which is largely rural it took the University there several years to run courses in middle-sized towns like Rotorua, Tokora and Gisborne; union seminars have already been held in small centres such as Cambridge, Hautapau, Kawerau, Matamata and Putaruru. In the Auckland/northland region where there are many Maori workers trade union seminars have been undertaken on the Marae at Te Tii, Otiria and Mataatua.

Of the courses taught so far, 55 per cent comprise union competency skills for delegates and officials (how to read and interpret awards; how to negotiate on behalf of members; how to write reports and chair meetings; how to calculate figures); 14 per cent have been on special interest topics such as health and safety or for particular groups such as women, Maori and Pacific Island unionists. Twenty-five per cent have comprised a variety of courses covering new legislation, updating developments in social policy and the law, giving skills in economics and maths; and equipping union representatives to understand more about the industry they work in.

The last eighteen months have also made us aware of widespread illiteracy and innumeracy in the community, and we see the opportunity of using trade union seminars to teach proper literacy (see Lankshear in this volume). The reason for this is that trade union seminars provide an appropriate context in which English and maths can be taught in a way which empowers people by teaching them about the power relations within which they exist both as unionists and as citizens.

Some of the outcomes, over the past eighteen months, have been unexpected: our published and video resources have been greatly in demand by employer organizations as well as unions. Employers have been stimulated to run more courses both for unions (for example, construction site safety) and their own members (for example, for representatives on ACCESS councils), a welcome increase in educational activity! In addition, the educational skills that unionists possess are now more widely recognized

by employers and, for example, one union is now regularly invited to contribute to induction programmes for new staff.

We have just completed a more systematic evaluation of a number of seminars run by TUEA, interviewing participants up to six months after attending. In many respects the results have been heartening in the amount of information that has been retained and found useful because the courses have been relevant to the interests and concerns of those who have attended them. Here are some representative comments about the seminars that have been run:

They're geared to my needs. They're practical rather than theoretical. Unions provide these courses without school formality. (Denise, a recent school leaver)

The thing I like is, I know the person teaching me so I relax and enjoy myself. Some of the things we've learnt are: how to run a committee, how to chair a meeting, how to negotiate, how to read an agreement properly. (Lionel)

We have a lot of people up North who are starting to learn about unions. Only through the union are we learning anything. Half the workforce didn't get to secondary school where I work. All I have learnt has come from being a delegate. Now I try to teach myself something new each day. (Hine)

I left school at Tolaga Bay at 14. I went scrub cutting, shearing and shepherding. I wouldn't have had any other schooling. Over the past few years I've been to eight union seminars. They have taught me to speak out and to understand what's being said. (John)

In some respects, however, the results have been depressing, because of the realization of how much there is to learn and how inadequate a dispensation of five days a year is in which to learn it. Moreover, unionists who have had some trade union education report a sense of isolation because of the general ignorance about trade unions in the society as a whole.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude by placing the recent developments in trade union education in the present political context. At a time when many of the Labour government's policies have considerably weakened the trade union movement, the government's acceptance of the need for a trade union education run by the trade union movement should be welcomed. The history of workers' education in New Zealand has been marked by the hostility of the state and employers to it (Shuker, 1985), and indeed employers were antagonistic to the 1986 Act which set up TUEA and state funding for it. It may be that government support for trade union education was a hangover

from its early days in power when it appeared to want to operate on the basis of consensus and it appreciated the very unequal struggle faced by trade unionists, particularly in the area of educational resources. Now, however, it has returned to the notion of consensus politics through the idea of a compact between employers, the state and the trade union movement. But a genuine compact between the three parties can only be reached if they are approximately equal in negotiating strength, which is why I have been arguing for the necessity of a strong trade union movement such as they have in Sweden. As they have appreciated in that country, the extension of citizens' democratic rights over their working lives requires industrial democracy, but it also needs to be accompanied by greater democracy in the political and cultural spheres; the three areas of life are ultimately inseparable in creating a climate of consensus in which democratic citizenship can thrive.

If the contribution to the extension of citizenship rights is a long-term aim of trade union education, what policies can help to support it in the immediate future? Here there are three limited but practical recommendations I would like to make:

- 1 Factual information about trade unions should be taught in schools as part of the core curriculum. The fact is that unions remain the most frequent institution belonged to by the working class in our society.
- 2 Given the latter point it would be good adult education practice to use these established institutions as a base from which to further educational opportunities. The Task Force on Trade Union Education suggested that project funding for non-formal education should be made available to union sponsored groups, a recommendation which provided further funds for courses to help, for example, those with literacy and numeracy problems.
- 3 Following on from the point that knowledge of the trade union movement should be widely disseminated, and its viewpoint understood, there should be union representation on such bodies as university councils.

These are, of course, modest proposals, as indeed the initiative of setting up a trade union education authority has been. We have really just begun, but the important point is that the principle of trade union education as an essential element in contemporary democracy has been accepted.

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Work and Education

Alan Scott and John Freeman-Moir

The basis of our society — in fact of our civilization — is the production and exchange of commodities for profit. One of the key commodities in society is human intelligence and skill and the great majority of adults in all capitalist societies must exchange this commodity or at least depend directly on this exchange (for example, children and unpaid domestic workers) for survival. All these people constitute the working class since they act directly under the economic compulsion to sell their skill. Excluded from this class are those people who can accumulate capital and live off the interest. There are many differences between groups within the working class and it is this stratification which makes working class unity the central objective of working class education.

Given the economic compulsion attached to selling skill it is easy to see how significant the fact of unemployment must be for any individual kicked out of work. The collective significance of unemployment follows from the chasm it rips through the working class as a whole. It separates worker from worker, detaches masses of workers from daily social intercourse centred on work, and undercuts effective participation in many other spheres of society including our immediate neighbourhoods.

From these introductory considerations, which there is not time to spell out now, we can derive two necessary conditions for realizing the goal of working class education. *First*, full employment which guarantees the capacity of socially utilizing the skills developed through long years of education. Just as any unsold commodity represents a waste of social activity, so the unemployed person is, from the point of view of society as a whole, a social non-entity. *Second*, participatory democracy — significantly available, opposed or even repressed in liberal democratic societies — allows working people to take control of their lives, communities and institutions. Of course, participatory democracy is not realizable under capitalism except in very limited ways, nor will capitalism evolve in this direction as social democrats like to imagine. Nevertheless, the struggle for working class education is part of the wider struggle of working people to gain control over the conditions of life. The achievement of emancipation cannot be won under

capitalism either through the so-called free market or by means of progressive redistribution organized by policy-makers who assume that the state is neutral. Without arguing the case here, we oppose both the 'free market' of the right and the 'neutral' state of social democracy. However, with social democrats we do seek to get as much as we can for our class by way of the state, but not because we think this provides a straight path to a fully democratic society.

The failure of employment and the failure of democracy threatened always to defeat working people and to divide the class, so that we can, in fact, speak of a dual class. This notion, then, of the divided working class is not a category of impressionistic sociology but a real effect of historical development and central to the problems of working class education – problems which, we must say, are rather hidden behind the banality of a seminar title like 'towards successful schooling'. Successful schooling from the perspective of capital is not at all the same thing as a working class view of success. A seminar title which obscures the class division of New Zealand already plays its part in mystifying discussion and begging solutions.

Unemployment

Unemployment has two basic causes in capitalist countries, including New Zealand:

- (i) decline in the rate of growth, and from the end of the long post-World War II economic boom a rate of growth which is consistently lower than the average rate of growth of productivity of labour due to technological development;
- (ii) the impossibility of the economic system absorbing growth in the working age population into employment.

It is also necessary to take into account the question of automation and robotization. In particular industries this has had significant effects on the organizational strength of the working class. In terms of total employment it is difficult to arrive at precise figures. A recent OECD study predicts that between the mid-1980s and early 1990s robotization will cut jobs somewhere between 4 per cent and 8 per cent in the West and between 2 per cent and 5 per cent on a world scale.¹ These trends are closely connected with the problem of lowering and changing skills. Nevertheless, it is not a failure of skill, either in training or targeting, which accounts for the massive levels of unemployment we now observe.

The structural unemployment of the West is now long-term. Relatively conservative estimates of unemployment put it at 32–35 million for the OECD countries. This is likely to rise to 40 million by the early 1990s.

In New Zealand the total registered unemployment, including students and those on subsidized work and schemes such as Access, is about 160,000.

By the end of 1989 this figure, which is a very conservative estimate, was close to 200,000. There are many ways to analyze such figures — both quantitatively and qualitatively — but from our point of view one fact stands out above all others. This is the growing fragmentation imposed on the working class, and with it growing demoralization, already evident in particular regions, suburbs and groups. It is this trend which pushes hundreds of thousands down and under and this is what we mean by the creation of a dual class. Without going into detail here, some of the grosser features of this fragmentation are easily noted.

Regionally the levels of unemployment are extremely variable, as Table 14.1 shows. Behind these figures lie extremely differential effects on communities.

Table 14.1 Registered unemployed (excluding vacation workers) by districts.

District	All persons		Change on month	Percentage labour force
Whangarei	7,019	(6,813)	206	14.7
Takapuna	802	(702)	100	1.1
Auckland	9,007	(7,818)	1189	4.9
Manukau	8,385	(7,798)	587	7.0
Hamilton	10,061	(9,946)	115	9.0
Tauranga	3,014	(2,584)	430	9.2
Rotorua	7,809	(7,669)	140	13.1
Gisborne	2,607	(2,659)	-52	14.9
Napier	2,851	(2,794)	57	11.0
Hastings	2,890	(2,652)	238	10.5
New Plymouth	4,588	(4,079)	509	10.9
Wanganui	2,963	(2,945)	18	10.2
Palmerston North	4,399	(4,170)	229	7.8
Masterton	1,689	(1,574)	115	9.8
Lower Hutt	2,111	(1,860)	251	3.7
Wellington	4,624	(4,069)	195	4.3
Blenheim	1,335	(1,332)	3	9.5
Nelson	2,277	(2,480)	-203	8.4
Greymouth	1,653	(1,707)	-54	12.5
Christchurch	11,189	(10,461)	728	7.5
Timaru	2,012	(1,827)	185	9.6
Dunedin	5,557	(6,403)	-846	7.9
Invercargill	2,916	(3,153)	-237	6.9
New Zealand	101,398	(97,490)	3903	7.6

Source: Household Labour Force Survey, December 1987 Quarter.

About 50 per cent of all unemployment is among young people less than 30 years of age. Among teenagers about 10 per cent of the registered unemployed are Pakeha whereas about 25 per cent are Maori. Among teenage Maori women the unemployment rate is probably about 45-50 per cent.

When one notes that 25 per cent of the registered unemployed have been jobless for more than six months, then a further consideration is forced on us. Thousands of young adults have never worked, or only in a fragmentary way. Work is central to how our time is structured, our energies deployed, to the development of social relationships and participation in society. Unemployment, in a society based on the commodity of human skill, is a fundamental means of miseducation.

Fragmentation also occurs in relation to race and education where Maori and Pacific Island workers, and less qualified workers are relatively more unemployed, as can be seen from Tables 14.2 and 14.3.

Table 14.2 Rates of unemployment by ethnic groups

	Female	Male	Total
European	3.3	3.0	3.1
New Zealand Maori	11.1	11.4	11.3
New Zealand Maori/European	6.1	6.5	6.3
Pacific Island Polynesian	5.0	8.0	7.1

Source: Household Labour Force Survey, December 1987 Quarter.

Table 14.3 Percentage rates of unemployment by level of education

No school qualification	5.3
SC1 or 2 subjects	4.9
SC3 + SUBJECTS	2.8
Sixth-form Certificate	3.2
UE, matriculation	2.4
HSC	1.9
University bursary, scholarship	1.6

Source: Household Labour Force Survey, December 1987 Quarter

The fragmentation of the working class by unemployment is a further extension of divisions within the labour market and work process. Just to provide a single example, during the latter part of the boom and throughout the economic depression there has been a massive evolution in part-time work. Most of these workers are women who also carry heavy loads of domestic labour, and most of this work is low paying, low status and difficult to organize within unions. Thousands of these women workers contribute to a certain 'invisibility' about unemployment since many women do not register as unemployed because they are not eligible for any benefit. Table 14.4 shows the percentage of full-time and part-time workers by sex.

Historically, capitalism has used every conceivable division to maintain its dominance over working people and their communities. In a prolonged crisis — and we are talking now about a period which is nearly fifteen years in extent — these potential divisions are exacerbated, sometimes to an extreme

Table 14.4 Percentage of full-time and part-time work by sex

	Full-time	Part-time
Female	34.9 (432.1)*	71.5 (217.8)
Male	65.1 (806.9)	28.5 (86.8)

* = numbers in brackets in 000s

Source: Household Labour force survey, December 1987 Quarter.

degree. A politics which is based only on the goal of achieving a more equitable distribution of goods, including education provision, is already a politics of defeat in this situation. In a period of crisis it translates into negotiating over redundancies and overseeing the distribution of an ever diminishing budget. The weakest members of the working class and their children will suffer the most quickly and the most profoundly. The general result is to weaken and divide the working class still further. Questions raised by economic inequality remain secondary in a strategy which takes seriously the achievement of working class power.

It is important to oppose the emancipatory potential of shorter working hours and automation to the destructive effects of underemployment by capitalism. Far from extending leisure to greater numbers as the rate of unemployment increases, we have instead a denial of leisure and freedom. The only 'solution' under capitalism is to create a dual society based on antagonistic groups of working people:

- those who continue to work, though for tendentially declining wages;
- those who are kicked out of work, or cannot get work and survive on benefits, welfare, returning to domestic labour, etc.

In all of this we find a transitional form of dropping out which particularly hits women, youth, Maori workers and Polynesian immigrants. An effect of this process is pressure by capital to keep wages low and drive them down further as well as undermining awards and conditions won by the New Zealand working class over a long period of time. Within the educational sector the most immediate evidence of this pressure is to be seen in the attempt by the state to keep cleaners' wages pegged to the lowest of those paid in the private sector, the response of the state to the PPTA salary claim and the State Sector Bill.

The first condition of working class education which must be fought for is full employment. About the last time this received any serious recognition from the Labour Party was eight years ago. Bill Rowling, then Leader of the Opposition, put it like this:

An explosive situation faces New Zealand's youth. This will not change while New Zealand maintains unemployment and is willing

to sacrifice the rights of young people merely because they have been born at an economically inconvenient moment. I will not accept a pool of young unemployed in New Zealand. If that means we have to give a job guarantee for the first five years of a young person's life, then that must be done. If it means the State must pay full wages for a young person to be apprenticed to a private employer, then that must be done. (*Press*, 14 May 1980)

At about the same time the FOL Conference adopted the Working Women's Charter. Two of its clauses make interesting reading

- *1 The right to work for everyone who wishes to do so.
- *8 Introduction of a shorter working week with no loss of pay, flexible working hours, part-time opportunities for all workers.

The only working class solution to the long-term unemployment we now face is a reduction of the working week without loss of pay. It is no use trying to create artificial jobs. The government is certainly right about this. Instead we need to divide the total number of workhours in the economy by the number of people looking for work. To break the unemployment cycle, which means that some people do not have jobs, both work and unemployment have to be shared equally. Reducing the working week to thirty-two hours would create approximately 350,000 new jobs.

A reduction in the working week could solve both the unemployment problem and the problem of shrinking demand in the economy. When employers argue that they cannot cut hours without simultaneously cutting wages, in order to protect profits, they overlook the fact that shrinkage in consumption, as wages continue to fall and unemployment increases, will force businesses to retrench and even close down.

This is by no means a new solution — the first Labour government cut the working week to forty hours. And since then, technological advance has increased the productivity of labour tremendously. For example, the Skellerup Footwear Factory in Christchurch, which uses semi-automatic machines, now makes twice as many shoes with a third of the staff it had two-and-a-half years ago. Earlier in 1989 the company sacked even more workers. The union immediately voted no confidence in the government's economic policies, the employer said the remaining 150 jobs are secure and the union quibbled over some individual cases of redundancy. Each such episode in New Zealand is a further lesson in futility for workers and their children.

Either a mass movement involving all unions defends jobs, fights for a reduction in the working week and defends wages or continued defeats are inevitable. But the cost of these defeats will reach vastly further than to just those thrown out of a job, although the cost is probably incalculable by now. The further reaching consequences will be carried by young people who never get to employment. Their participation in society is denied at the very point they enter it as young adults. We cannot seriously educate

young people if unemployment is the graduation promise, which brings us to participatory democracy, the second necessary condition for working class education.

Participatory Democracy

The term 'participatory democracy' is hardly the kind of term to play around with for just a few minutes. Very simply this form of democracy means people participating in decisions about their own lives and communities within a wider context of representation based on the principle of immediate recall. Such a view is to be directly contrasted with Parliamentary democracy which precludes participation for the mass of people and which confines power and policy to the upper echelons of the state.

Liberal social democrats are undoubtedly troubled by the present power of the state and hope for some redistribution of that power. On this view the state is seen as having a potentially positive role, even as a collective liberator for the great majority of people. For example Steve Maharey (*National Business Review*, 9 February 1988) puts it like this: 'the State should act to limit inequality . . . it is the means by which people can gain access to power over their lives'. Modern Stalinists in the East, Democratic socialists in the West are pretty much in agreement on this theory of the State. Going along with this essentially benign, reformable view of State Power is an over-estimation of the role of intellectuals as policy makers, the potential for change via instruments like Royal Commission's and simultaneously a rather passive view of working people, though this latter point may be hidden behind theories about ideological hegemony, rightward moving shows etc. and highly refined conceptions of society from which classes in all but a nominal sense have disappeared.

Any grappling with the issues of working class education must first understand the enormous limits imposed on democratic participation in our society. The austerity measures of the Labour Government have significantly reduced the avenues and opportunities for democracy such as they existed. At the very least — participation requires people having the material and organisational means to take control over their own lives and communities. The protracted crisis has weakened the material conditions of democracy. Falling and low wages and rising unemployment each play a role in making daily life more insecure, more out of control and hence, less subject to democratic scrutiny, decision-making and administration.

The fundamental demand must be for free public education. Increasingly, working class parents and their children are struggling to pay for the costs of schooling. We would like to give two examples. Recently, a school in Christchurch called a meeting of parents to discuss a school camp. Only ten parents showed up and they mostly felt it a waste of time because no one could afford the relatively modest costs. At the neighbourhood school, where the children of one of the authors attend, parents have a real struggle

each year to raise just \$4000 extra as an input into the school budget. In the next suburb the struggle is the other way around. There the Committee has a struggle to spend the surplus of funds. Free public education is no luxury, but a necessity. However, it is not a demand which can be won short of a mass campaign by the working class movement in support of full employment giving some meaning to education.

Building that movement is critically important in New Zealand since it cannot be realized through the Labour Party, the membership of which has now declined to around 18,000, and most of that apathetic, pessimistic and uncommitted. Part of the effort to build a strong socialist movement, aimed at achieving power by working people, is to fight for every possible element of democracy within schools and society. Not because our objective can be won by either attrition of the state or creeping reform, but because any victory whatsoever serves potentially to strengthen people, any defeat is difficult to redress. So the way schools are is very important to consider, which is the question we turn to now.

Schools

Let's face it, to be crudely realistic, schools are enormous clobbering machines. Inside them middle and upper class children have their rough adolescent non-conformism honed smooth, even beaten smooth if they attend certain private schools. For working class children the effects of schooling are far more catastrophic. For we believe that teachers and principals, advisers and inspectors, Department of Education officers and officials engage in mental genocide, by which we mean the systematic and brutal destruction of the intelligence of working class children. In expressing it this way, we want to make it clear, we are not speaking rhetorically or polemically.

Rather we want to capture what is for so many children the essence of schooling that lies beneath its apparently civilized exterior. We recognize, though, that a large number of the people we have mentioned who are engaged in this murder of the brain support unequivocally policies which address issues of equity.

The problem is that educational policy is deeply entrenched within the philosophy of liberal reformism. This philosophy has dominated educational thinkers and policy makers in the Western democracies for over thirty years. It is a viewpoint which has failed disasterously to live up to its promise of ending poverty and degradation through a social levelling produced by a meritocratic and egalitarian education system. Despite numerous policies and billions of dollars of tax-payers' money children all over the world continue to leave school as unequal as they went in.

In almost all Western societies during the last ten years education systems and methods have come under scrutiny. In the USA, between 1983 and 1985, for example, well over a dozen reports on education were published. In New

Zealand during the 1980's we have also seen many debates, curriculum reviews, books and letters to editors in the newspapers about education. The message from all of this seems to be twofold. On the one hand, New Zealand, 'a nation at risk', is falling behind other OECD countries and education is seen as an important cause of this. On the other hand individuals are missing out because educational opportunity is very unequal, and those who are directly affected by education — parents, students, and the public — are excluded from decision making. As the national party election manifesto expressed it; 'The ambition is to ensure the attainment by each individual of that level of personal, social and economic skill that will help them stand on their own feet, and be enterprising in their own cause and the nation's. All of this 'if we are to foot it with the rest of the world' and achieve 'a world-class standard of education.'

At the heart of the philosophy lies what "experts" call 'human capital theory: the notion that people invest in themselves through education; the idea that through hard work and basic aptitude they can gain the qualifications and knowledge which they will later cash in for an occupational and social level commensurate with their abilities. The nation invests in the total aggregate of individuals, and so it becomes the duty of the state to provide an efficient system of education which is fair and open to all. Not only does natural justice demand it, but to settle for anything less would be to waste the limited pool of human resources any country has at its disposal. As Jim Bolger puts it: 'education must be seen as a critical investment in the nation's key resource — our people.'

Unfortunately, this egalitarian concept of schooling as the key to an efficient and just social mobility is an illusion. In Europe, Australasia and North America the life chances of children remain about the same as their parents. Despite the massive expansion of universities it is still basically the middle and upper classes that enter them. In the United Kingdom, for example, the percentage of working class children studying at university in 1987 is practically the same as in 1947. In New Zealand the figure remains unchanged since the 1950s. It is an unpalatable fact for educationalists, that individuals within classes move up and down the social ladder at the same rate as they have always done.

Liberal reformism arose, of course, precisely to solve this problem. Its first tack was to devise fair and scientific selection and assessment procedures. When these failed, it abolished streaming and introduced a comprehensive system of schooling. But when the problem was found to be as intractable as ever, home background was highlighted as the key, and compensatory education programmes became the norm. In the Labour government policy or intended policy the problem has yet again been shifted one step along. This time teachers themselves are in the gun sights, and it is their performance and, the overall performance of the schools they work in that are to become accountable.

Sadly, we know of no credible evidence from anywhere in the world

to suggest that any of this will make a blind bit of difference. As Michel Bouquet, a French educationalist, remarked: 'As long as adults remain unequal, then schools will continue to reproduce inequality in their children.' Any number of reforms to education will not fundamentally shift the pattern of inequality in New Zealand society. This is the hard lesson to be learned from the evidence in all Western societies we have already alluded to.

Despite the best intentions of reformers, inequality of opportunity remains the reality. Because choices are exercised inside a society which is socially and economically unequal, the outcomes of those choices will also be unequal. This can hardly be the road to democracy, though it might well ensure greater prosperity for an ever decreasing number of New Zealanders. The obvious way to increase choice to people is to make the social and economic resources of this country democratically available to all people. But this is not a policy which either Labour or National would support. There is clear bipartisan support for David Lange's dictum that 'inequality is the motor of the economy'. Regrettably it is the same motor which drives our education system. While we do not think this inequality has to be forever inevitable, we do not believe that the policies of this or any other government have even begun to address the issue.

Full employment, we reiterate, is the key policy so that at least children perceive schooling as part of a logical and natural progression into the adult life of work which we believe is their right and not their privilege. But we wish to make it clear that full employment is only a necessary condition; it is not sufficient in itself. As we have already suggested, schools are not neutral institutions; rather they wage war on the working class, and all liberal reformist policies from 1:20 ratios or reading recovery programmes, to the introduction of Taha Maori or non-sexist materials will not alter this. Indeed they cannot alter the fact precisely because these policies are carried out in institutions which are fundamentally classist in their structure and operation.

We realize that in expressing our ideas strongly in this manner we will be accused of adopting a unitary approach which sees schools as monolithic institutions mechanically fulfilling a social reproductive function. We would offer three points in answer to this.

Firstly, we agree with Bowles and Gintis, who answer a similar charge in their latest work, that whatever the resistance of children, or whatever the good intentions of teachers, the correspondence principle still holds. In other words there is still a long run accommodation of educational structure to the economic division of labour.² Secondly, when we say that schools wage war on the working class, that is precisely what we mean. It does not matter whether teachers are firing bullets of love and concern devised by the best minds in humanist psychology. The outcomes are the same: the victims of the war end up on the dole or in low paid work. Thirdly, working class children are made illiterate or improperly literate, they are taught (more properly mistaught) by different methods and their School Certificate marks are stolen from them.

Let us repeat what we said earlier. Educational institutions are fundamentally classist in their structure and operation. Our schools are organized in rigorously hierarchical fashion; conflict and consensus lie at their heart; competition whether overt or implicit is their *modus operandi* and their social relations are antagonistic. They justify their structure by reference to a liberal definition of human nature which so clearly reflects the materialist economic structure in which it arises. So children are organized and herded; they are separated, divided and selected; they are controlled, ruled and punished; they are defined, described and reported on; they are watched and they are timed. They eat when ordered to and pee when they are told. Their hands are tied and their mouths are closed.

The consequences of this, we hasten to add, are not simply the creation of a race of featureless, mindless zombies, an image so beloved of the flower power prophets of the 1960s. Let us make that clear; we are not uttering the hippy cry of 'do your own thing'. The consequences are the creation of a violent, brutalized culture in opposition for whom school is at best a yawn and at worst an oppressive regime to be resisted by all manner of bizarre and extreme behaviour. It is a culture of people whose normative intelligence — that which in saner times would make them ambitious and enterprising, hardworking and caring citizens — has been obliterated. What is left is the instinctual intelligence of the caged animal or the stupefied brain of the prisoner.

This culture in opposition has been well documented in overseas research; in particular we mention the work of Corrigan, Willis, Marsh *et al.*, who have all described a particular form of resistance by violent males.³ The best known work is Willis' *Learning to Labour*, and the further point here about Willis' lads is that their particular form of opposition was constructed around 1976-77 before the Conservatives and Thatcher had come to power, and when chances of employment were very good indeed. It is apparent, is it not, the direction in which the children of the unemployed and the underemployed — the underclass in other words — are heading. In our social system, a life without work is a life without hope; and a life without hope is a desperate, dangerous or destroyed life.

It is primarily in our schools that the real selection for work takes place, so our schools will become desperate and dangerous places. What we need are not simply compensatory education programmes. Rather, these programmes have to be put in place within schools whose social relations have been radically reorganized and where children have a real say in the matter and manner of their education. We are not talking here of currently in vogue cooperative learning schemes. We take the necessity for those as read. Nor do we mean that the problem can be resolved by an extension of guidance counselling facilities, laudable though that aim is.

Liberal theory has for too long, and for too large a degree, emphasized the transhistorical element of human nature and personality. This lack of concern for the social and historical construction of the psyche has led to

an overemphasis on patching up individuals so that they can survive; rather than creating systems in which they can grow. And so, too often, guidance counselling has become the point at which the buck stops. This has meant, obviously, that children's very real resistance has been interpreted psychologically, and not politically, as we believe is the case. The unhappy conclusion to draw from this is that increasingly the children of the underclass will come to be seen as a bunch of nutters to be sedated out of anger or conditioned into apathy.

As far as we are concerned the whole of schooling has to be a cooperative exercise in which rules and rituals, work schemes and timetables, curricula and content are constructed freely by all participants. A further consequence is that the teachers' colleges will have to become free institutions and move away from the benevolent despotism or the 'democratic' corporatism that manages them today, and, of course, beyond them, the universities whose concept of academic freedom inside a controlled and managed environment is one of the larger ironies we know. The aim of this is not to provide the members of the underclass with the skills necessary for work. To restate the obvious: schools cannot make jobs. The aim is to give back to children their intelligence that they might use it to transcend the narrow limitations in which their lives are lived.

Knowledge is control, but control over oneself is the first step to knowledge. Power to the people was the protest cry of the 1960s. If successful schooling is to be anything more than the vacuous term we have suggested it is, then power to the children must be the cry today — and power to their parents, and their teachers and their communities.

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Index

- accountability 56, 58, 60, 63, 226
administration: and the
 disadvantaged 96-103
 effectiveness of 62
adult education: in England 108
 and trade union movement 212, 217
 see also illiteracy, adult
alienation: in schools 141
 working class 164
assessment: changes in 169
 and disadvantage 151-3
 in ITP 132
 in National Curriculum 63, 135-6
attainment targets 63
- Boards of Trustees 29-30, 76
 power of 65-8
Britain: youth training and cheap
 labour 200
budgets: control of 64, 67
bureaucracy 121-2
 criticism of 122
 and ITP 128-9
 personality of 121-2
- capital accumulation 15
 crisis of 32, 55
capitalism 18, 19, 30
 and inequality 38, 46
 and underclass 176-7, 192
 and youth unemployment 198-9,
 223
capitalist society 28, 98
centralization: of education system 58,
 63
choice 161-2
 in education 25
 inequality of 226
- Christchurch School Leavers
 Study 153-4, 164, 165-7
citizenship: democratic 33-4, 36, 42
civil society 28, 29, 31
class: in education 227
 incorporation, and trade union
 education 211
 movement in 226
class-cultural: decision-making 161-3
 and education 168
 disadvantage 152
 transformation 111, 113
commodification: of education
 system 75
commodity form: and capitalism 18,
 19
community participation 10, 122
conjunctural education policy 27
comprehensive system: failings of 60
conscientization 191
consumer choice: in education 7, 58,
 61
counter-culture: in secondary
 school 114, 115
cultural: capital 30
 tolerance 143
curriculum 60
 control of 57, 58
 and culture 140
 grass roots 9, 123, 125, 136
 hidden, and Maoris 78-9
 hierarchies 80, 149
 innovation, politics of 121
 ITP 123-36
 nature of 136
 negotiated 41-3
 reform, background to 123
 and schooling oppositions 115

Index

- and trade unions 217
- see also National Curriculum
- Curriculum Review, The* 24
- decentralization 59, 62, 63, 89, 96-8
- decision-making: class cultural 161-3
- and democracy 225
- devolution of 26
- and improper literacy 190-1
- and IQ 152
- and subject choice 165-7
- delayed selection 43
- democracy: and authoritarianism 62
- educating for 139-40
- participatory 219, 225
- democratic: citizenship 33-4, 42
- and trade unions 212, 214, 217
- decision-making 143-9
- Hagley Model 147-8
- devolution: in schools 11, 25
- rationale for 26
- disadvantaged families 96-103
- Douglas, Roger 3
- see also Rogernomics
- economic: constraint, and welfare state 48-9
- democracy, need for 49-50
- power, and underclass 177
- education: control of 59
- crisis in 63
- decentralized 59
- and economic opportunity 95
- expenditure on 22
- per student 22
- inegalitarian 1
- irrelevance of 60, 112
- and market forces 54
- policy, and illiteracy 191-3
- reform 15, 24, 31
- Act, UK 59, 60
- and class system 10-11
- and Maoris 81-2
- and TS 55-72
- and state 6
- criticism of 23
- system ix
- Swedish 44
- and unemployment 222
- educational: decision-making 164-6
- standards 11, 60, 63, 69
- efficiency: cost 61
- in education 25, 56, 62
- egalitarianism 61, 62, 94, 100, 226
- employment: full, need for 219, 223-4, 227
- empowering families: role of 98-9
- England: working class schooling in 106-15
- see also Britain
- enrolment scheme 64
- enterprise culture 2
- equality 33
- and economic efficiency 49
- and Maoris 76, 81, 168
- notion of 160-1
- of opportunity 37-8, 61
- in education 101-2, 111
- equity: in education 25, 167-9
- gender 142
- goals of 96
- and ITP 128
- lack of 105
- and scaling 160-1
- social 115
- ethnic minorities: and illiteracy 181
- and underclass 177
- and unemployment 222
- examination: and disadvantage 151-3, 154
- pass rate differences 160-1
- results 8
- system ix-x, 153
- fiscal crisis: and education 59
- in New Zealand 20-3
- of state 19
- fiscal deficit 21, 22
- free market ideology 25, 32, 33, 149
- funding 11, 26
- deficit 6
- state 15
- gender equity 142
- Government Management (1987) 21, 23
- governors, school: power of 65-8
- Gramsci, A.: framework of 28
- grant maintained status 64
- Hagley High School: democratic decision-making 147-8
- pluralism of 140
- hegemony 28-9
- hierarchies: and illiteracy 184
- in schools 227
- social 40
- and underclass 176

- and working class education 111
- hui* x, 81
- ideology: and Education Reform Act 54-5, 56
- and Maori language and culture 80-2
- identity: and decision-making 162-3
- illiteracy: adult 180, 192
- definition of 180
- patterned 181-8
- rates of 181
- and underclass 175-6, 179-88
- and unemployment 9-10
- immigrants: and education 94-5
- improper literacy 175-6, 188-91
- indulgency pattern of control 68
- industrial democracy: need for 41, 49-50
- inequality: in education 89, 96-103
- and Maori education 73
- in New Zealand society 226, 227
- of opportunity 226
- in-service training: need for 45
- integral state 29
- IQ: and decision-making 152
- ITP, Integrated Transeducation Programme 123-36, 142-3
- modules 130, 131
- negotiations for 125-9
- politics of 123-4
- problems of 133
- progress of 134-6
- status of 126, 133
- students' response to 133-4
- Kohanga Reo* 7
- Kura Kaupapa Maori* x, 74, 77-9, 82-3
- labour market: and education 9
- and inequality 38, 45
- restructuring 200-1
- and transition education, 197-206
- labour: process of schooling 65
- Relations Act (1987) 209
- learning: experiences, enjoyable 204
- schemes 228
- legitimation 25
- crisis 19-20, 22, 26, 27
- liberalism: and welfare state 35-6
- literacy 111
- and trade unions 215
- see also illiteracy
- local education authorities 57
- local financial management 65
- Maori: culture (*Taha Maori*) 142
- educational conferences 75
- language 78, 79, 141
- and Pakeha education system 7, 73-4, 78-9
- dominance by 79-80
- resistance 78, 79, 141
- marae* x
- market forces: in education 54, 60, 63, 75, 99, 101
- rigged 67, 68
- marriage: and value of school 93-4
- Marxism 16, 17
- See also neo-Marxism
- mediation service: at Hagley High School 143
- National Curriculum 5-16, 63, 65, 123
- neo-Marxism 17, 28
- New Right 34
- in education 1
- flexibility 122
- though 46-50
- New Zealand: community involvement, in education 115
- Educational Institute x
- fiscal crisis 20-2
- occupational categories 153
- open enrolment 64, 67
- opting out 53, 64, 67, 68
- Pacific Island girls: working class, and education 89-104
- Pakeha x
- culture 80
- domination by 7, 75, 78-80
- education system 7, 77
- ideology, and Maoris 80-2
- parent involvement: in Maori schools 78, 81, 83
- power of 63, 89
- in schools 39-40, 45, 58
- see also empowering families
- participatory democracy 219, 225
- Picot Report* 3, 5-6, 23-7
- pluralism: demands of 141
- and education 139-40
- policy importation 7

Index

- policy-making: in education 2
- and Maoris 73, 74
- social 3-5
- popular education 106, 108, 110
- poverty: consequences of 44-5
- PPTA, Post Primary Teacher Association xi
- principals: legal status 148-9
- power of 9
- role of 5
- style of 6
- project work 42
- and ITP 129, 130
- and schooling oppositions 115
- qualifications: educational, value of 90-1

- race: and educational achievement 98
- and illiteracy 181
- and underclass 177
- reading: practice of 188-9
- Recovery 192-3
- relevance of education: to working classes 110-12
- Rogernomics xi, 3, 48
- routinization 65-6
- Royal Commission on Social Policy 1, 2, 3-5, 48, 49, 105, 193

- SC, School Certificate 153, 155-61
- grades 8
- inequality in 9
- and NZY3E3 cohort 156
- participation and pass rates 157-9
- school: Charter 101-2
- to-work transition courses 124
- schooling: accommodation of 106-7
- as cooperative exercise 229
- effects of 225
- essence of 226
- oppositions 106-7, 112-15, 228
- resistance to 112, 113, 115, 166, 228
- schools: anti- 90-1
- community relationship 39-40
- democratic 9, 39-44
- elected board 5
- and inequality 39
- organizations, democratic 40
- as private relationship 5
- society relationship 38
- segregated schools 65
- SES: and school achievement 154
- SFC, Sixth Form Certificate 153

- social: class, and educational achievement 98
- control 205
- inequality 15
- problems 34
- socialist movement 225
- societal change: and education 74
- society: form of, and education 101
- structure of, and illiteracy 184-5
- sociological imagination: development of 43
- and improper literacy 190-1
- standards, educational: falling 60
- minimal 69
- raising 63
- state: capitalist welfare 18, 20
- expenditure 19
- controls on 21
- funding 15
- interventionism 20, 36, 61, 100, 101
- power of 225
- role of 30, 31
- theories of 16-20
- see also* integral state
- streaming (banding) 43, 164, 226
- structure of society: and illiteracy 184-5, 191, 192
- structural education policy 27
- subject oriented curriculum: and ITP 130
- subjects: choices 165-7
- groupings 157-9
- hierarchy of 156, 158, 169
- Swedish: education system 44
- trade union movement 212-13, 217

- Taha Maori* 142, 227
- targeting 37, 47
- teachers: accountability 226
- criticisms of 61
- loss of control 66
- from the people 109, 114
- of the people 109-10, 114
- power of 59
- professionalisation 110, 114
- pupil relations 112
- unions 6, 9, 149
- teaching: control over 55
- profession, criticism of 60
- about trade unions 213-14
- technological-meritocratic model 151, 160
- Te Kohanga Reo* xi, 74, 78, 82

- Tomorrow's Schools* 3, 23, 27, 29, 30, 122
 criticisms 60, 62
 and democratic decision-making 148-9
 and ERA 55-72
 and ITP 122, 135
- trade unions: attacks on 47
 education 10, 209-18
 achievements of 215-16
 government support for 216
 reasons for 210-14
 leaders, and educational attendance 211
 negotiators 210
 representation 217
 teacher 6, 9, 149
- training: for stock 201
 youth 197, 198, 201
- transition education 10, 197-206
 alternatives to 202-6
- TUEA, Trade Union Education Authority 209-10
 seminars 216
- underclass 175-6, 228, 229
 development of 176-9, 186
 and illiteracy 179-88
 and working class 178-9
- unemployment 220-25
 and education 9, 11-12, 22-3, 59
 and illiteracy 187, 190
 impact of 3, 44
 New Zealand registered 220, 221
 of Polynesian adolescents 92-3
 significance of 219
 and the state 18
 and transition education 197-206
 and underclass 175
- universal benefits 47
- unpopular education 106, 108
- wage: differentials 45
 labour 200
 for immigrants 94
 social 37
 solidarity 37
 work 202
- Waitangi, Treaty of xi, 2, 76, 82, 101, 115
- Weber, M.: and bureaucracy 121-2, 135
- welfare state 33, 34, 35-6
 and New Right thought 46-50
 in New Zealand 35
- Whanau* 141-2
- work: alternatives to full-time 203
 conditions 9
 ethic 199
 part-time 222, 223
- working class: alienation 164
 aspirations 168
 and democratic schooling 40-4,
 and education 1, 8, 9, 38, 219-29
 educational networks 108-9
 and ITP 124-36
 Pacific Island girls, and education 89-104
 and SC 155
 schooling, in England 106-15
 teachers for 109-10
 and subject choice 165-7
 and underclass 178-9
- working week: reduction in 224
- Working Women's Charter 224
- workplace culture: influence of 90-1
- youth unemployment 197-206, 221, 225
- zoning 6, 10, 135-6

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